



**MEETING** : ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
**VENUE** : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD  
**DATE** : TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY, 2015  
**TIME** : 7.00 PM

**PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE**

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Councillor Mark Pope (Chairman)  
Councillors D Abbott, W Ashley, P Ballam, E Buckmaster, A Dearman,  
C Rowley (Vice-Chairman), G Williamson, C Woodward and B Wrangles

(Conservative Group Substitutes: Councillors R Beeching  
Liberal Democrat Group Substitutes:  
Independent Group Substitute: Councillor M Newman)

*(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member to Democratic Services 24 hours before the meeting)*

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Lorraine Blackburn  
01279 502172  
E-Mail: [lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.blackburn@eastherts.gov.uk)

## DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
  - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
  - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
  - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
  - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
  - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
  
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
  
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

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### **Audio/Visual Recording of meetings**

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## AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes (Pages 5 - 14)

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Member's Declarations of Interest and Party Whip arrangements.

5. Update on Community Energy (Pages 15 - 24)

6. Environment Healthcheck October to December 2014 (Pages 25 - 58)

7. Evaluation of Scrutiny 2014/15 and Work Programme 2015/16 (Pages 59 - 70)

8. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,  
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON TUESDAY  
11 NOVEMBER 2014, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor M Pope (Chairman).  
Councillors W Ashley, P Ballam, R Beeching,  
E Buckmaster, G Williamson and C  
Woodward.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors J Mayes, J Ranger and P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Cliff Cardoza	- Head of Environmental Services
Nick Kirby	- Environmental Inspection Team Manager
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer
George A Robertson	- Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services
David Thorogood	- Environmental Co-Ordinator

330 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Rowley and B Wrangles. It was noted that Councillor R Beeching was substituting for Councillor Wrangles.

331 MINUTES – 9 SEPTEMBER 2014

In respect of Minute 226 (East Herts Climate Change Action Plan – Review of Progress), the Environment Strategy and Development Manager provided an update in relation to the proposed Micro Hydro Scheme at Hertford Theatre. He stated that a plan had been developed and this had been submitted to the Environment Agency for their informal consideration. If no comments were received, then the Council could progress to the formal submission and planning stage. The Environment Strategy and Development Manager referred to other hydro plants in the South East and the lengthy time taken to progress them to implementation.

The Environment Strategy and Development Manager referred Members to a BBC Radio 4 broadcast “Costing the Earth” and urged Members to take the opportunity to listen to the podcast from 24 September 2014 called ‘Power to the People’ about hydro plants and the problems associated with their implementation.

The Chairman asked whether the planning stage might be achievable by December 2014. The Environment Strategy and Development Manager stated that this was unlikely, given the timeframes for Development Management Committee and likely responses from the Environment Agency.

In terms of publicity for the hydro scheme, the Environment Strategy and Development Manager referred to an “Open Day” at Hertford Theatre which had been well attended with the public responding positively to the benefits of the hydro scheme.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

332 IMPACT OF THE ASB CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014 ON EAST HERTS ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME POLICIES

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment submitted a report detailing the changes resulting from the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and how the new legislation would affect East Herts' current environmental crime policies.

The Head of Environmental Services explained that the new legislation covered a wide range of areas and although statutory guidance had been published in July 2014, further guidance was awaited. The Head of Environmental Services explained that the presentation would focus on aspects of environmental crime. He reminded Members that there would be a further report to Community Scrutiny Committee in March 2015 by the Head of Community Safety and Health Services in respect of the anti-social behaviour aspects of the new legislation.

The Environmental Inspection Team Manager gave a presentation on the new legislative powers which affected:

- Littering from cars
- Clearing litter and waste on land
- Graffiti and other defacement
- Controlling dogs.

The Environmental Inspection Team Manager referred Members to Essential Reference Paper "B" which set out the legislative implications for the Council and provided a summary of what was and was not, affected by the legislative changes.

Councillor C Woodward questioned the Council's ability to deliver the new legislative requirements in terms of resource implications and queried whether some of the new powers could be devolved to Town and Parish Councils which, he suggested, would be in line with the requirements of localism. The Environmental Inspection Team Manager acknowledged the new powers adding that devolution was something which Officers needed to

explore in more detail.

Councillor R Beeching queried whether there could be devolvement of some powers to PCSOs. The Head of Environmental Services stated that further guidance was needed. He explained how the fixed penalty warning process and issue worked.

Councillor J Mayes referred to vans being parked on various roads in the District including along the A1170 and a layby in the A120 (near Bishop's Stortford) which were being used as 'advertising boards'. The Head of Environmental Services stated that this related to advertising on the highway, which was not part of the legislation under discussion. He advised that it may be possible to address the under planning legislation and the matter should be raised with the Head of Planning Services.

Councillor J Ranger referred to the issue of devolving powers to several agencies which might lead to a lack of co-ordination and continuity in the escalation from warning notice to fixed penalty if different Officers dealt with the same individual. The Head of Environmental Services explained the process in so far as Anti-Social Behaviour was concerned and the need to keep a formal record of warnings given to allow other agencies to proceed to the next stage. The Head of Environmental Services stated that, in relation to Public Space Protection, Notices, these could be issued by Town and Parish Councils but that only agency partners could issue Community Protection Notices.

Councillor C Woodward reminded Members that the Council had one dog warden covering an area which was a third of the whole county. The Head of Environmental Services acknowledged that the Council had limited resources and that Officers were stretched in terms of their roles. He explained the role of the public in terms of reporting dog fouling issues and in coming forward with evidence. In relation to littering from cars and previous difficulties encountered in securing convictions, the new



legislation now held the registered keeper of the car responsible for litter being dropped out of a car. The Head of Environmental Services referred to the different powers which were now available to the Council.

Councillor E Buckmaster emphasised the advantages of joined up working arrangements in respect of nuisance behaviours arising out of Licensing/Planning decisions.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding further guidance, the Head of Environmental Services reiterated that he hoped that this would be available for consideration by Members in February 2015, but that would depend upon how quickly the statutory guidance was produced by Government.

Councillor C Woodward suggested that an item on the legislative changes be placed on the annual Parish Council Rural Conference and the new Urban Conference agendas for discussion next time they met. The Head of Environmental Services said that this would be discussed with appropriate Officers.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) Officers report back to a future meeting on how legislation and emerging guidance would be implemented by the Council; and

(B) the Council's Environmental Crime Policy be reviewed to ensure compliance with legislation and best practice.

### 333 ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman submitted a report setting out the future work programme for Environment Scrutiny Committee for 2014/15.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the inclusion of a report onto the work programme, of changes to the

Council's Environmental Crime Policies following the introduction of new legislation and guidance. The Chairman also referred to reports for inclusion in relation to a Fuel Poverty Action Plan and proposals for supporting community groups in respect of Community Energy Projects. These were supported.

Councillor C Woodward referred to the number of sky lanterns and balloons being dispersed into the air and that the matter was currently being reviewed by Essex County Council. The Head of Environmental Services stated that East Herts did not allow sky lanterns to be launched from any of its public open spaces and that this issue could be covered by a protection order in future. He stated that helium balloons could also be covered by a protection order and these issues would be considered when the new orders were drawn up for EHC parks and open spaces.

Councillor R Beeching referred to private land close to a local hotel used for weddings and the resultant debris including wire, from balloons and lanterns being released. The Head of Environmental Services gave a summary of the legal position and advised that the Council had no powers to prevent balloons from being released from private land, although this should be discouraged. Councillor C Woodward suggested that the Council should issue a statement of its views on this issue on its website. The Head of Environmental Services agree to update the web pages accordingly.

Councillor R Beeching stated that the issue of lanterns and balloons could be addressed in relation to licensing conditions and if applications were made for Temporary Events.

The Committee approved the report, as amended.

RESOLVED – that the work programme, as amended, be approved.

### 334 SERVICE PLANS MONITORING

The Leader of the Council and Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services submitted an exception report on the 2014/15 Service Plans.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services provided an update of 32 actions which had been either achieved, on target, suspended, deleted or had had their completion dates revised. It was noted that action 14-ES03 (Development of a business case for the Council to fund replacement gym equipment at Hartham and Grange Paddocks) had been deleted and that 11-ES21 (Castle Weir Micro Hydro Scheme at Hertford Theatre) referred to earlier in the meeting, was under consideration by the Environment Agency.

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services advised that there were four outstanding actions for 2013/14 which should have been referred to Community Scrutiny Committee. He provided a summary of the actions.

Councillor E Buckmaster queried whether enhancements to Sawbridgeworth would be progressing. The Head of Environmental Services explained that appropriate funding needed to be identified and that further discussions with the Town Council needed to take place.

In response to a query from Councillor E Buckmaster regarding working with schools and Hertfordshire County Council to ensure the long term financial sustainability of joint use pools, the Head of Environmental Services explained that on-going discussions were taking place with two schools, both of which were uncertain about government funding regimes and that options for the future sustainability of leisure centres were being explored.

Councillor C Woodward congratulated Officers and the Dog Team in achieving the RSPCA Gold Footprint Award. He asked that Members' congratulations be formally

passed on to Officers. This was supported.

Councillor C Woodward asked where the “Love Your Local Market” week had been held and queried whether it could be extended. He also asked for an update in relation to the revised management plan for Waytemore Castle. The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services explained that the market had been held in Hertford and would write to the Member concerning any proposals to extend it. In relation to Waytemore Castle, the Head of Environmental Services advised that a lot of work had been undertaken on site in terms of a joint approach with Bishops Stortford Town Council. He hoped to report back with further information as soon as possible. The Head of Environmental Services commented that the Master Plan was under development with the Town Council and significant progress had been made. This would be completed in 2015.

Councillor C Woodward referred to SPARC and the fact that some Councils had adopted three-weekly collections. He sought assurances that the Council was keeping abreast of what was happening with other Councils. The Head of Environmental Services advised that he was aware that some councils were considering this but did not support it as some residents place food waste in their black bin and this would mean it stayed there for three weeks. This would not be acceptable especially during the summer months. He stated that the three-weekly collections of residual waste introduced by a few councils was supported by more frequent collections of food waste.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that progress against the Council’s priorities, including revised completion dates, suspensions and deletions against 2014/15 Service Plan actions and 2013/14 and 2011/12 Service Plan actions be noted; and

(B) Members' thanks be passed on to Officers for their efforts in achieving the RSPCA Gold Footprint Award.

335 ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY HEALTHCHECK - AUGUST 2014 TO SEPTEMBER 2014

The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services submitted a report setting out the performance of key indicators relating to Environment Scrutiny for the period August 2014 to September 2014. The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services referred Members to further information which was now available in relation to EHPI 191 (Residual Household Waste per Household) and EHPI 192 (Percentage of Household Waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting).

Councillor R Beeching referred to EHPI 2.1d (Planning enforcement: Initial Site Inspections) and EHPI 157c (Processing of Planning Applications: Other applications) which had turned "red" and "amber" respectively. The Chief Executive and Director of Customer and Community Services advised that targets had been affected as a result of staffing difficulties and that plans were in place to recruit more staff.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the performance for the period August 2014 to September 2014 be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Chairman .....
Date .....

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 17 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT BY THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

UPDATE REPORT ON COMMUNITY ENERGY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

- To update the Committee on initial schemes that officers are exploring in relation to facilitating community energy activities within the district.

<b>RECOMMENDATION FOR Environment Scrutiny</b>	
<b>That:</b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>To scrutinise the suggested activity relating to Community Energy and to identify any additional topics for specific discussion/inclusion within future reports on Community Energy; and,</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>To receive a further report on potential Community Energy project activities at a future meeting.</b>

1.0 Background

1.1 At the meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee in September 2014, members received a detailed report on the East Herts Climate Change Action Plan and the activity undertaken in its implementation.

1.2 The report introduced to Members the concept of Community Energy. It was agreed that further reports would be provided to this Committee as project work in the area develops. This report

aims to update Members on some potential initiatives that currently are being explored by officers.

## 2.0 What is Community Energy?

2.1 The Government's Community Energy Strategy was published by Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) last year. The Government defines community energy as collective action to reduce, purchase, manage and generate energy. There are clear links with the national carbon reduction agenda and also fuel poverty as well as energy efficiency initiatives.

Community energy projects have an emphasis on local engagement, local leadership and control and the local community benefiting collectively from the outcomes. Community-led action can often tackle challenging issues around energy, with community groups well placed to understand their immediate local areas and to bring people together with common purpose.

2.2 Activity relating to community energy may be led directly by local community groups either independently or in partnership with other organisations. Local authorities are increasingly being seen as pivotal players in facilitating local action, be it in supporting community activity or in terms of establishing their own projects.

2.3 The previous report detailed a number of potential examples of community activity including community owned renewable energy infrastructure; local community support for energy efficiency measures; energy clubs; and renewable heat projects amongst others.

## 3.0 Collective Energy Switching

3.1 Collective Energy Switching is a relatively new initiative in the UK which has been set up to help residents and SME's (small and medium enterprises) reduce their energy bills. It is usually run by a council or some other trusted independent body (e.g. a consumer group). The purpose is to encourage residents to group together and use their collective power to negotiate a better price for their energy.



Research (DECC 2014) has found that less than a fifth of energy consumers in the UK are on the lowest tariff available, yet many consumers are still reluctant to switch due to complicated deals, fears over contract cancellation charges and a simple lack of time.

3.2 Collective energy switching aims to make it easier, quicker and cheaper for all residents to switch energy deals and in particular:

- Support those in fuel poverty get a lower price for their energy as well as preventing more people slipping into fuel poverty.
- Support financial inclusion.
- Ensure that the needs of vulnerable residents are met (for example, the elderly or those with disabilities).

3.3 Collective Energy Switching Schemes offer a way of harnessing the power of collective purchasing to enable consumers to achieve better deals on their energy bills.

To date over 150 councils, including Hertfordshire County Council (which joined a scheme operated by Peterborough City Council), have taken part in collective energy switching schemes and over 300,000 people in England have signed up to council run schemes. However, there has been a wide range of success across the UK with some schemes proving relatively costly for local authorities in terms of set up and operational costs. To overcome this the Local Government Association (LGA) has launched a Collective Switching Framework.

3.4 The purpose of the LGA collective switching framework is to support councils and other public sector organisations in implementing Collective Energy Switching Schemes within their communities on behalf of their residents and SMEs. The framework is owned by the LGA, but the procurement service is run by the North East Procurement Organisation and utilises a switching service operated by a company called iChoosr.

3.5 Using the Framework Agreement for Collective Energy Switching Schemes has a number of benefits:

- The framework is free to use for all LGA members
- The framework is fully compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations (OJEU complaint) 2006
- iChoosr has already been assessed for its health and safety, equality and diversity, environment and

sustainability, and quality compliance, hence requiring no further vetting.

- Terms and conditions have been established to underpin the framework with a flexible contract that can be adapted for local needs whilst still ensuring a relatively simple process.

3.6 Of particular importance is the use of a single switching provider as this allows for the development of a critical mass, which is key to the success of such schemes. This is because, as the process involves an auction arrangement with energy companies, so the greater the potential number of residents the more competitive a tariff is likely to be achieved.

In the past many schemes have involved monthly auction costs to local authorities, sometimes in the region of £5000. For this reason officers have hesitated in the past in recommending that East Herts becomes actively involved in its own scheme. The LGA framework delivers a scheme at little or no cost to the authority. However, there are two cost implications. One is that any scheme depends on good promotion and clearly there may be some costs in this area if such a scheme is promoted outside the Council's "free" publicity routes. The second is that it is an internet based scheme. For residents that sign up and have to be contacted by post there is a charge of £1.50 per resident levied under the framework.

3.7 However, whilst there are some possible minimal operational costs there is also the potential to generate a small level of income that may be utilised to offset such costs. This is because for each switched customer a referral fee is paid to the Council at the following rates:

- £5.50 per switch for gas
- £5.50 per switch for electricity
- £11.00 for dual fuel switches

This income could therefore be used to fund promotion of the scheme, other energy initiatives, community energy facilitation or indeed any other purpose.

As mentioned above a charge of £1.50 is levied for each resident who registered offline. However, this cost would be absorbed by any referral fee. Additionally, should the total fees

for offline registrations exceed the total switching contribution generated, no invoice would be made by iChoosr , as it is a nil value contract and hence local authorities using the using the framework should not incur any financial cost directly related to the contract.

- 3.8 It is therefore proposed that officers continue to investigate the detailed arrangements for the operation of the LGA framework contract with a view to establishing an East Herts collective energy switching scheme to benefit local residents, later this year.

#### 4.0 Community Energy Saving Competition

- 4.1 The Government recently launched a Community Energy Saving Competition at the end of January 2015, aimed at providing grants of up to £20,000 to incentivise local project activity. The grant scheme had a very short open period of just a couple of weeks, and closed on 10<sup>th</sup> February. As such it was not possible to submit a specific bid for East Herts, but at the time of writing a joint partnership bid, through the Herts Sustainability Forum, was in preparation. In addition local community groups were advised of the competition. The committee will be updated at the meeting.

#### 5.0 Partnership Activity

Community energy is very much about working in partnership with the community and as such East Herts has already been active in becoming one of two lead local authority members in a Hertfordshire wide Community Energy Network. The Network is aimed at bringing together voluntary and community sector organisations across the county to develop community renewable energy projects. A conference and workshop is planned for the summer and will be coordinated by the Herts Sustainability Forum, led by East Herts Council.

#### 6.0 Opportunities for Community Activity in East Herts

- 6.1 As previously reported one local community group based in Hertford - Hertford Energy Now - has established successfully its own self funded community energy scheme. It is proposed that the Council investigate how it can best facilitate community groups to develop similar such projects across the district. Officers

are considering whether it may be possible to organise a number of local meetings to highlight the opportunities of community energy to the voluntary sector, in terms of its potential for income generation for local organisations.

6.2 Local meetings will have some cost to the Council in terms of premises hire and staff time, but it may be possible to meet this from within existing budgets. In addition it is suggested that a desk top exercise be undertaken to ascertain the potential for community renewables across the district in terms of available community “roof space” for the installation of solar PV. It may be possible to undertake such a study using contacts with the University of Hertfordshire, alternatively external consultants would cost in the region of £4,500. Officers will investigate such a project in more detail.

6.3 In order to assist community groups with developing their own projects there may be a need to provide some level of grant assistance, e.g to help support feasibility studies, technical advice and publicity. It is suggested that it may be possible to extend the remit of some of the Council’s existing community and/or environmental grant schemes to encompass community energy projects should the Council be so minded.

In addition should the Community Switching scheme (discussed in 3.0 above) be established any income generated from this could be utilised to provide support for other community energy initiatives in the district.

## 7.0 Conclusion

7.1 It is believed that Community Energy as a concept has strong potential in terms of the development of local community driven projects. It is recommended that the initial ideas detailed in this report, such as the introduction of a community energy switching scheme, are explored further and implemented if possible. Further update reports including details of other possible initiatives will be presented to the Committee at future meetings, as appropriate.

## 8.0 Implications/Consultations

8.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper ‘A’**.

## Background Papers

LGA Collective Switching Framework (2014)  
Community Energy Saving Competition Guidance Note (DECC January 2015)

Contact Member: Councillor Malcolm Alexander -Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment  
[Malcolm.alexander@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:Malcolm.alexander@eastherts.gov.uk)

Contact Officer: Cliff Cardoza – Head of Environmental Services–  
Ext No - 1478  
[cliff.cardoza@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:cliff.cardoza@eastherts.gov.uk)

Report Author: David Thorogood – Environmental Strategy and Development Manager - Ext No – 1621  
[david.thorogood@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:david.thorogood@eastherts.gov.uk)

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## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

### IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives <i>(delete as appropriate):</i></p>	<p><b>People – Fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute</b></p> <p>This priority focuses on delivering strong services and seeking to enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable.</p> <p><b>Place – Safe and Clean</b></p> <p>This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p><b>Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities</b></p> <p>This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p><i>Not applicable</i></p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p><i>There are believed to be no legal implications arising from this report.</i></p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p><i>It is believed that financial implications arising from this report can be met from within existing budgets and additionally the use of the LGA framework agreement may generate a very small financial return that could ultimately be invested in other projects.</i></p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p><i>There are no significant implications arising from this report.</i></p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p><i>There are no risk management implications arising from this report.</i></p>
<p>Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:</p>	<p><i>Fuel Poverty has a significant effect on people's health and well being, with cold, poorly heated homes a recognised cause of excess winter deaths and other health issues. Any measures that help reduce the costs of energy for local residents may assist those in fuel</i></p>

	<i>poverty.</i>
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## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

### ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 17 FEBRUARY 2015

#### REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY HEALTHCHECK – OCTOBER 2014 TO DECEMBER 2014

WARD (S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report:

To set out a report on the performance of the key indicators that relate to Environment Scrutiny for the period October 2014 to December 2014.

<b>RECOMMENDATION FOR ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY</b>	
<b>That:</b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>the reported performance for the period October 2014 to December 2014 be noted.</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>the Executive be advised of any further recommendations.</b>

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### 1.0 Background

1.1 This is a performance report relevant to Environment Scrutiny's terms of reference covering the period October 2014 to December 2014.




1.2 The report contains a breakdown of the following information by each Corporate Priority:



- An overview of performance, in particular where there have been issues and remedial actions taken during the period. Should members want more detailed information on a specific month, they should refer to that month's Executive Corporate Healthcheck report available on the council website.
- The indicators where data is collected monthly, with performance for December 2014 presented in detail (the most up to date available) with previous months summarised in a trend chart.
- The indicators where data is collected quarterly, with performance

for Quarter 3 presented in detail (the most up to date available) with previous quarters summarised in a trend chart.

- 1.3 All councillors have access to Covalent (the council’s performance management system), should they wish to interrogate the full range of performance indicators. The Performance Team are able to provide support and training on using the Covalent system if required.
- 1.4 **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’** Shows a summary analysis of the performance indicators that are reported to Environment Scrutiny. Please note when reviewing the summary where a performance indicator is showing a deteriorating trend compared to the previous period, it does not mean it is necessarily ‘Red’ or ‘Amber’.  
**Essential Reference Paper ‘C’** Shows the full set of performance indicators that are reported on a monthly basis to this committee. Essential Reference Paper C has been sorted by status e.g. all performance indicators that are ‘red’ are listed first etc.  
**Essential Reference Paper ‘D’** Provides guidance notes and definitions for the performance indicators relating to Environment Scrutiny Committee.

The codes used in relation to performance indicator monitoring are as follows:

Status	
	This PI is 6% or more off target.
	This PI is 1-5% off target.
	This PI is on target.

Short Term Trends	
	The value of this PI has changed in the short term.
	The value of this PI has not changed in the short term.

## 2.0 Report – Indicators grouped by Corporate Priority

### Place

#### **Performance analysis**

- 2.1 **EHPI 2.6 – Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal.** Performance was 'Amber' for Quarter 3 for the second consecutive quarter. The trend is similar to that experienced last quarter. This is a rolling quarter covering the periods from September to November.
- 2.2 **EHPI 191 – Residual household waste per household.** Waste levels were high in November 2014 (this indicator reports one month in arrears) when compared with data from the rest of year. However when a comparison is made with November 2013 (299 kgs) performance is much improved.
- 2.3 **EHPI 192 – Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.** Although November 2014 performance has slightly declined from the previous month (this indicator reports one month in arrears), performance has improved when a comparison is made to the same period last year (52.68% in November 2014 compared to 50.61% in November 2013).
- 2.4 **EHPI 2.1e – Planning Enforcement: Service of formal Notices.** No notices were served in December 2014 therefore there is no performance to analyse.
- 2.5 The following indicators were 'Green', meaning that the targets were either met or exceeded for December/Quarter 3 for 2014. They were:
- EHPI 2.1d – Planning Enforcement: Initial site inspections.
  - EHPI 2.2(45) – Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste.
  - EHPI 2.4 – Fly-tips: Removal.
  - EHPI 2.5 – Total waste collected by the district (kg per household).
  - EHPI 2.23 – Planning decisions delegated to officers.
  - EHPI 157a – Processing of planning applications: 'Major' applications.
  - EHPI 157b – Processing of planning applications: 'Minor' applications.
  - EHPI 157c – Processing of planning applications: Other applications.

2.6 While meeting the target for December 2014 the following indicator showed a declining trend when performance was compared to the previous month:

- EHPI 2.2(45) – Number of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste.
- EHPI 2.5 – Total waste collected by the district (kg per household).
- EHPI 157a – Processing of planning applications: Major applications.
- EHPI 157b – Processing of planning applications: Minor applications.
- EHPI 157c – Processing of planning applications: Other applications.
- EHPI 191 – Residual household waste per household.
- EHPI 192 – Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.

Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper ‘C’** for full details.

## **Prosperity**

### **Performance analysis**

2.7 The following indicators were ‘Green’, meaning that the targets were either met or exceeded for December 2014. They were:

- EHPI 6.8 – Turnaround of pre NTO PCN challenges
- EHPI 6.9 – Turnaround of NTO Representations

Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper ‘C’** for full details.

### 3.0 **Implications/Consultation**

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper ‘A’**.

### 3.2

#### **Background Papers:**

- 2013/14 Estimates and Future Targets Report – Executive 4 March 2014.

Contact member:

Councillor Malcolm Alexander – Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment.

Councillor Paul Phillips – Executive Member for Economic Development.

Contact Officer:

Ceri Pettit – Corporate Planning and Performance Manager

Contact Tel Ext No 2240

[ceri.pettit@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:ceri.pettit@eastherts.gov.uk)

Report Author:

Karl Chui – Performance Monitoring Officer

Contact Tel Ext No 2243

[karl.chui@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:karl.chui@eastherts.gov.uk)

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## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives:</p>	<p><b>Place – Safe and Clean</b>  <i>This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</i></p> <p><b>Prosperity –</b> Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities  <i>This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</i></p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Performance monitoring discussions have taken place between Directors and Heads of Service.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>There are no legal implications arising from this report.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>Financial discussions have taken place between Directors and Heads of Service and any implications have been highlighted in the report.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There are no human resource implications arising from this report.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>By not having effective performance management arrangements in place puts the Council at risk of not being clear whether it's priorities and objectives are being met and if there are any service delivery issues, that could impact on their delivery. The Corporate Healthcheck report is one tool designed to help mitigate against this risk. Also effective performance management arrangements help to support transparency and increase local accountability.</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:</p>	<p>A number of the council's performance indicators do support/contribute to the health and wellbeing agenda. Any relevant indicators that are 'Red' rated are highlighted in the report and mitigating actions will be taken.</p>

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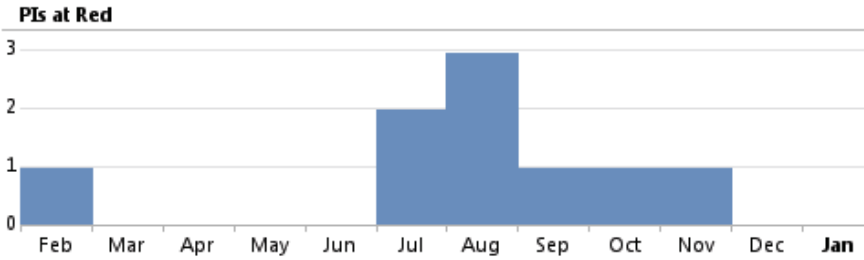
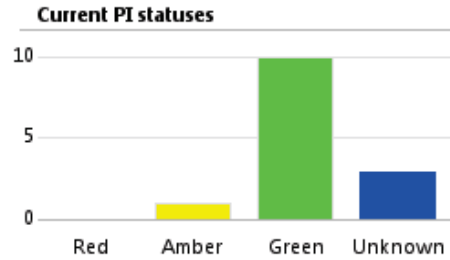
**Environment Scrutiny Summary - Essential Reference Paper B**

**0** PIs at Red

**1** PIs at Amber

**10** PIs at Green

**14** Total number of PIs



Best Performing (PIs)	Value	Target	Gauge
EHPI 6.9 Turnaround of NTO Representations. (MINI...	14 days	21 days	
EHPI 2.4 (47) Fly-tips: removal. (MINIMISING INDICAT...	1.60 da...	2.00 da...	
EHPI 2.1d Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspecti...	85.00%	75.00%	
EHPI 2.2 Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collec...	25.85	46.00	
EHPI 157a Processing of planning applications: Majo...	67.00%	60.00%	
EHPI 2.5 Total waste collected by the district (kg per ...	235 kgs	242 kgs	
EHPI 157b Processing of planning applications: Min...	85.00%	80.00%	
EHPI 2.23 (188) Planning decisions delegated to offic...	93%	90%	
EHPI 157c Processing of planning applications: Othe...	91.00%	90.00%	
EHPI 6.8 Turnaround of Pre NTO PCN challenges (10 ...	14 days	14 days	
EHPI 2.6 Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent f...	47%	46%	
EHPI 191 Residual household waste per household. (...	294 kg		
EHPI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for re...	52.68%		
EHPI 2.1e Planning Enforcement: Service of formal N...		70.00%	

Improving (PIs)	Value	Target	History
EHPI 6.9 Turnaround of NTO Representations. (MINI...	14 days	21 days	
EHPI 6.8 Turnaround of Pre NTO PCN challenges (10 ...	14 days	14 days	
EHPI 2.4 (47) Fly-tips: removal. (MINIMISING INDICAT...	1.60 da...	2.00 da...	
EHPI 2.1d Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspecti...	85.00%	75.00%	
EHPI 2.2 Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collec...	25.85	46.00	

Deteriorating (PIs)	Value	Target	History
EHPI 157a Processing of planning applications: Majo...	67.00%	60.00%	
EHPI 191 Residual household waste per household. (...	294 kg		
EHPI 157c Processing of planning applications: Othe...	91.00%	90.00%	
EHPI 157b Processing of planning applications: Min...	85.00%	80.00%	
EHPI 2.5 Total waste collected by the district (kg per ...	235 kgs	242 kgs	
EHPI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for re...	52.68%		

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## October to December Environment Scrutiny Healthcheck 2014/15

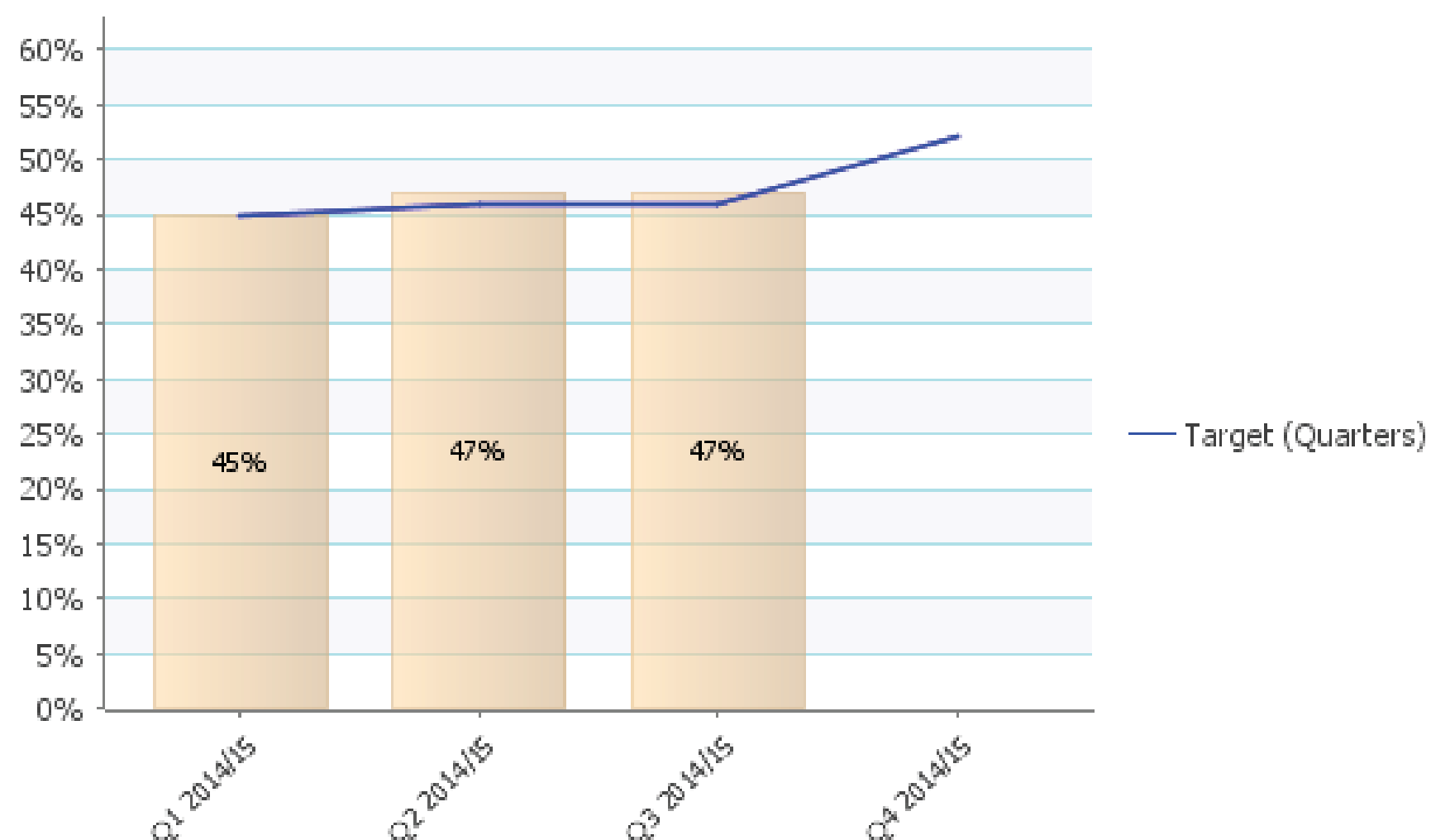
**Traffic Light Amber**  
**Corporate Priority: Place**

### Environment Services

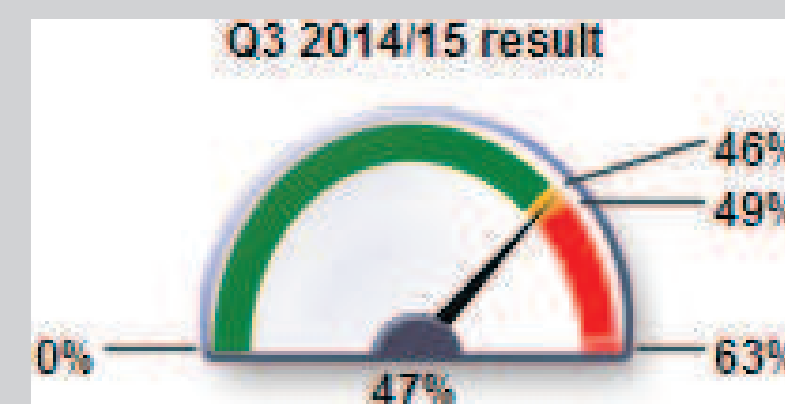
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 2.6	Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		47%	46%		Trend similar to that experienced last quarter. This is a rolling quarter covering the periods from September to November.	None

#### Trend Chart

**EHPI 2.6 Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)**



#### Performance Gauge

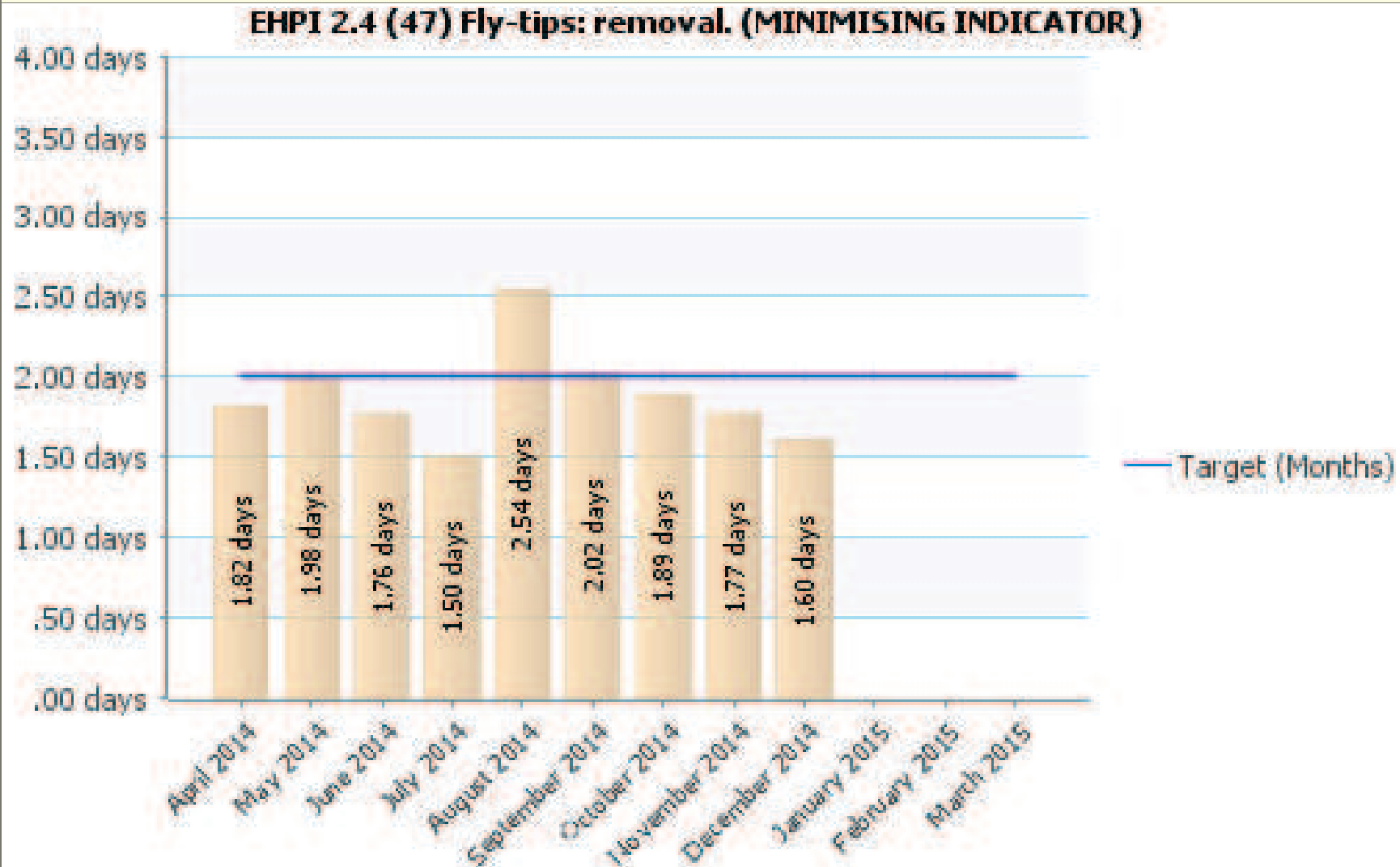


**Traffic Light Green**  
**Corporate Priority: Place**

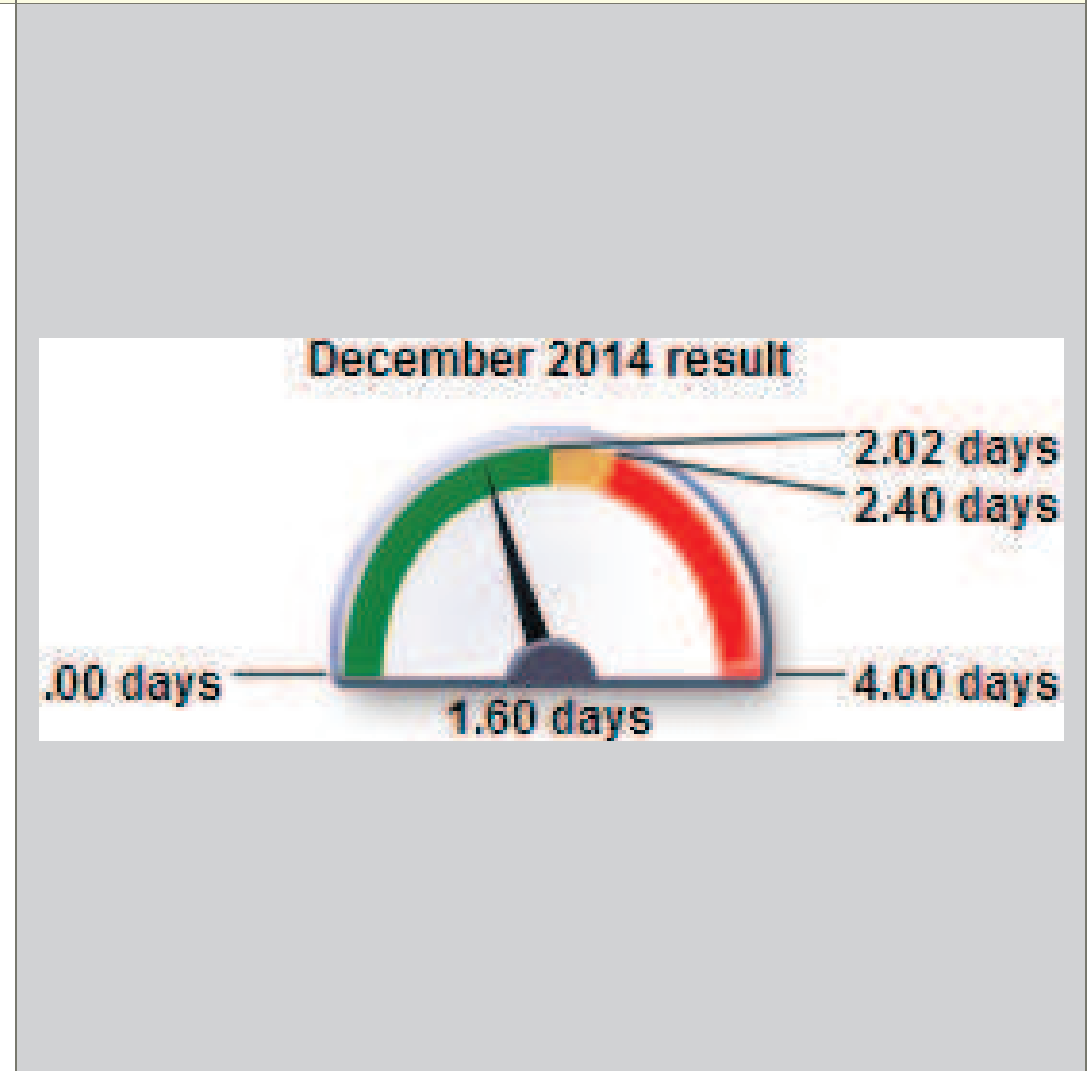
**Environmental Services**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 2.4 (47)	Fly-tips: removal. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		1.60 days	2.00 days		Performance improved in December due to faster removal times of large fly tips, still within target of 2 days.	<b>None</b>

**Trend Chart**

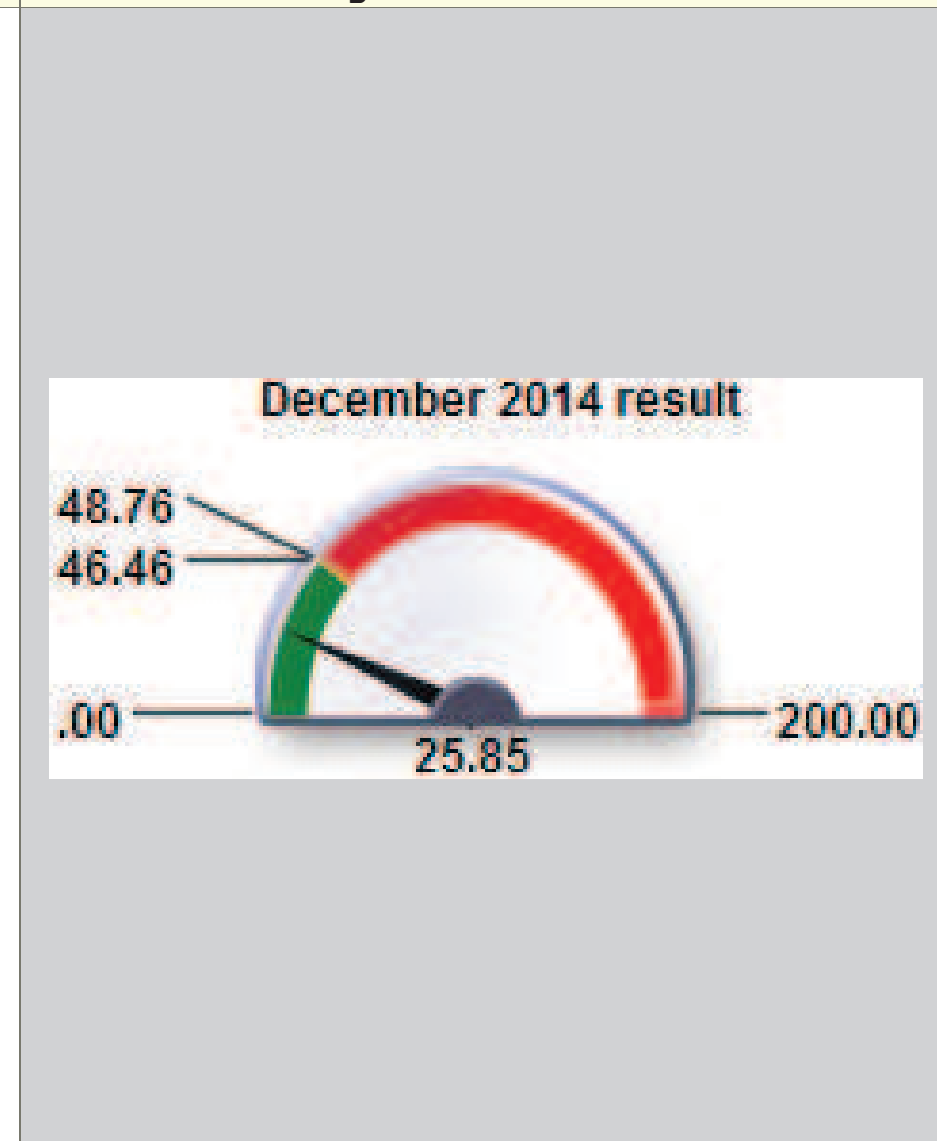
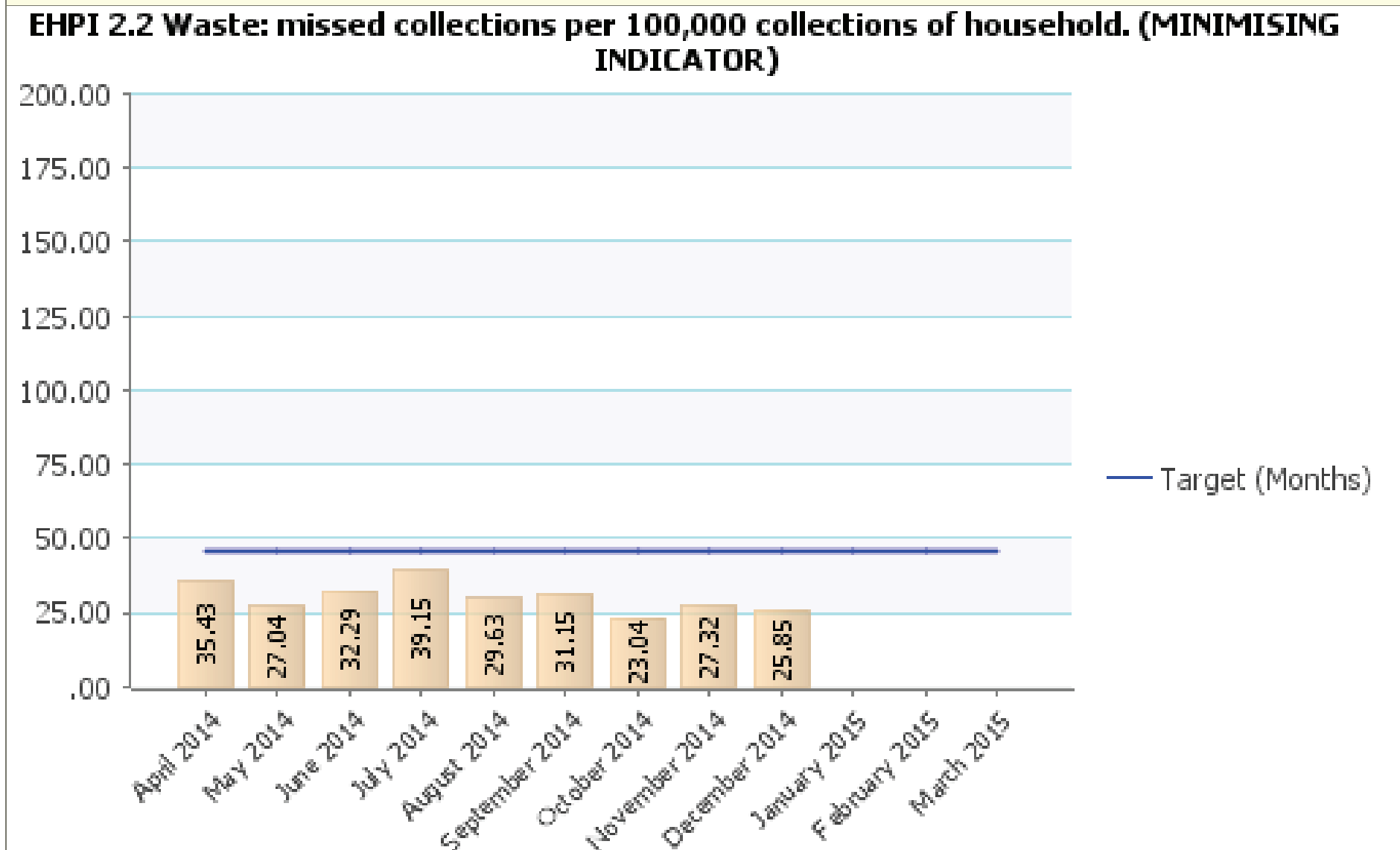


**Performance Gauge**



Environment Services							
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 2.2	Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)	✓	25.85	46.00	↑	Small decrease in December when compared to November (which is good). Still well within target.	None

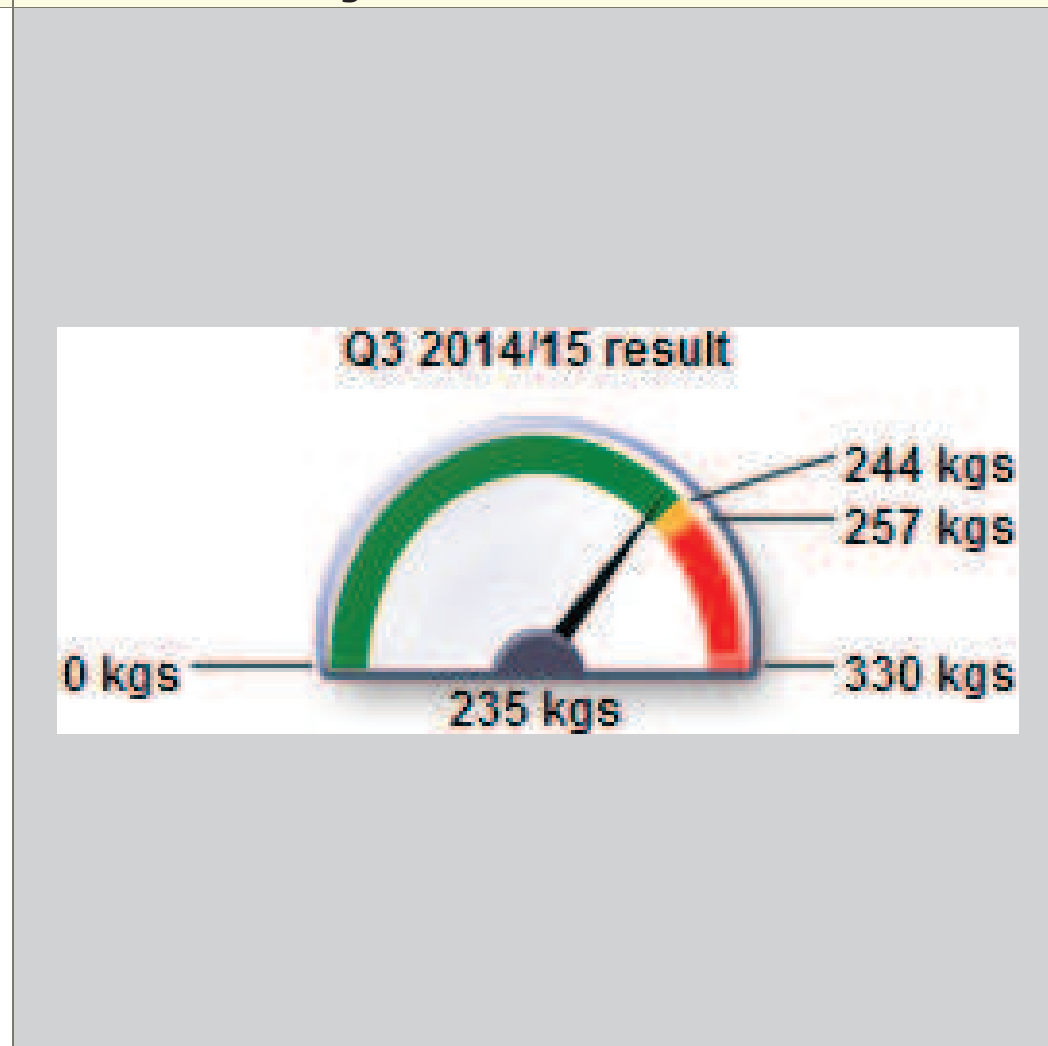
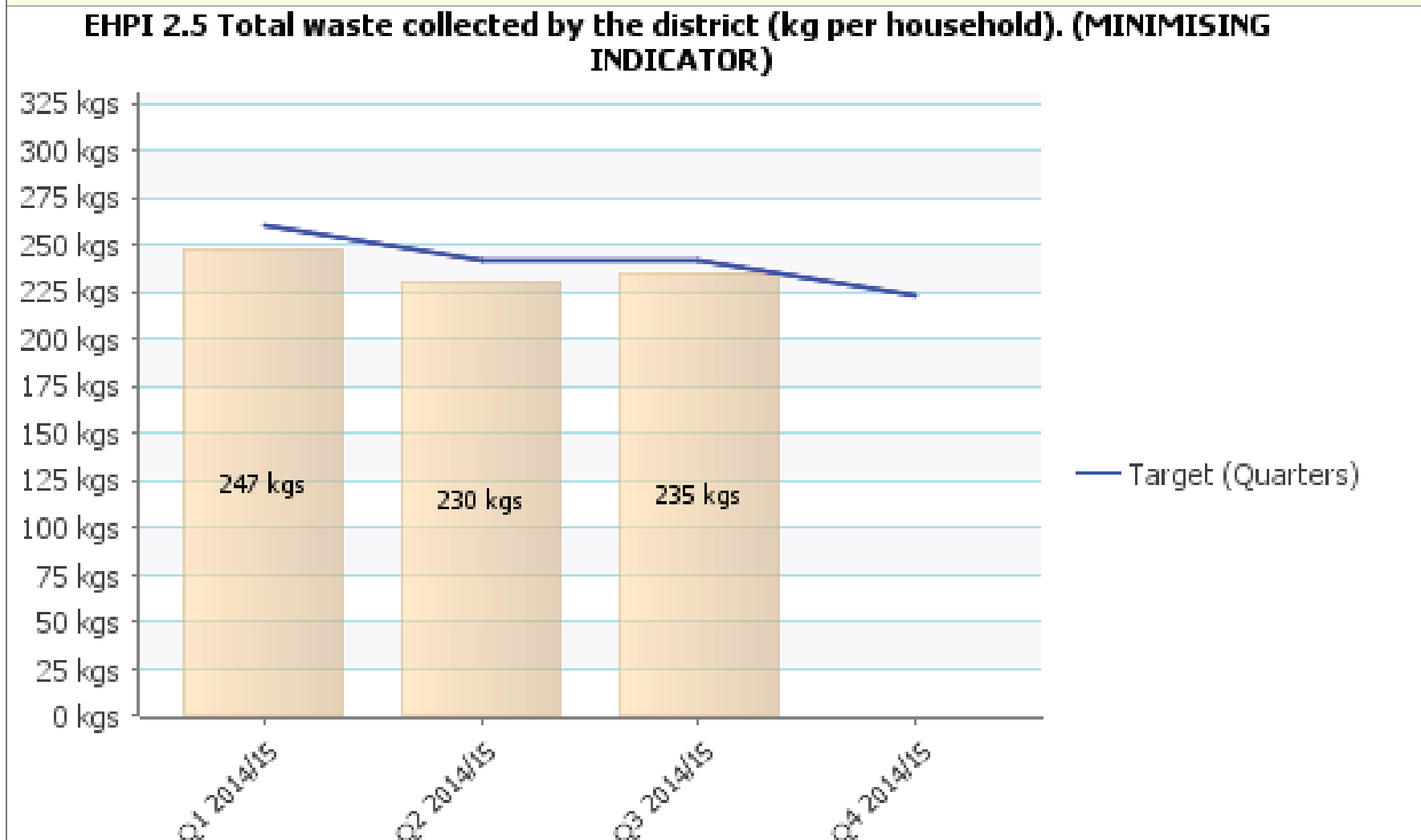
Trend Chart	Performance Gauge
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**Environment Services**

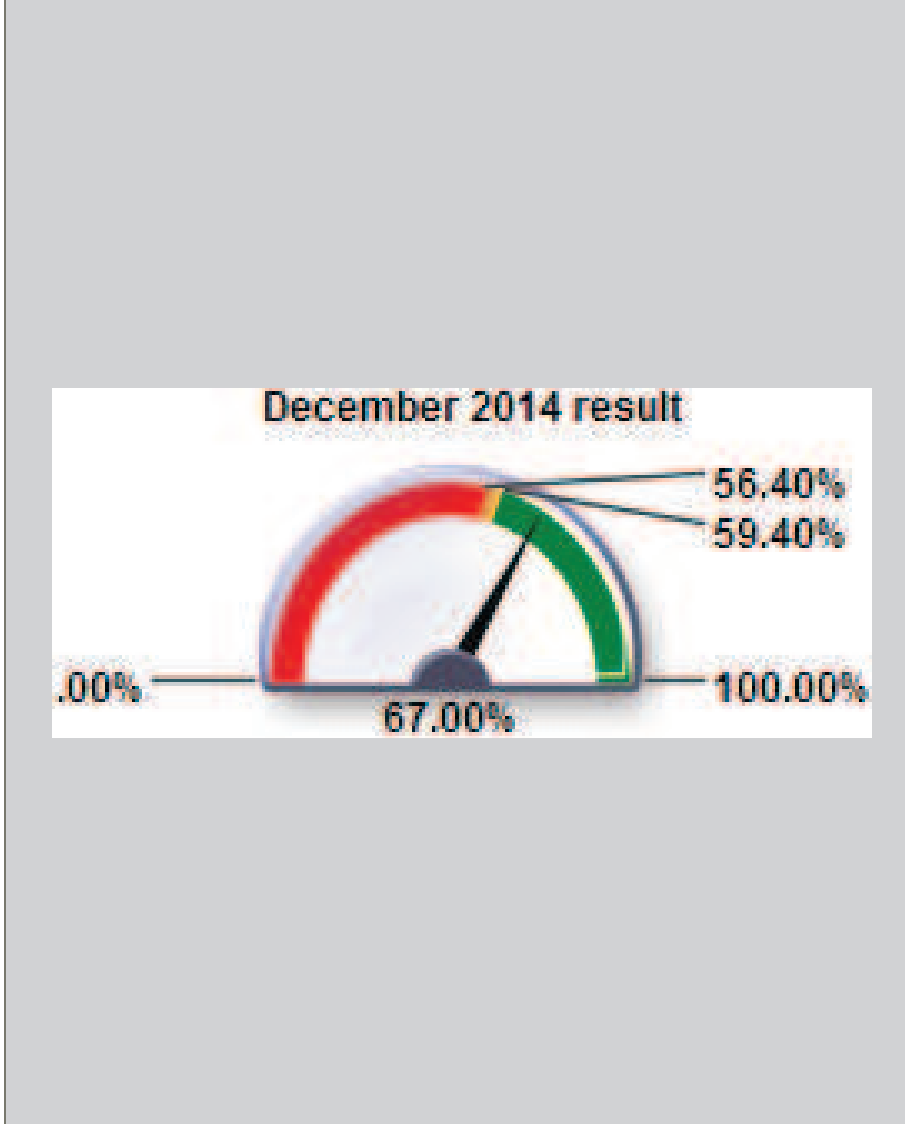
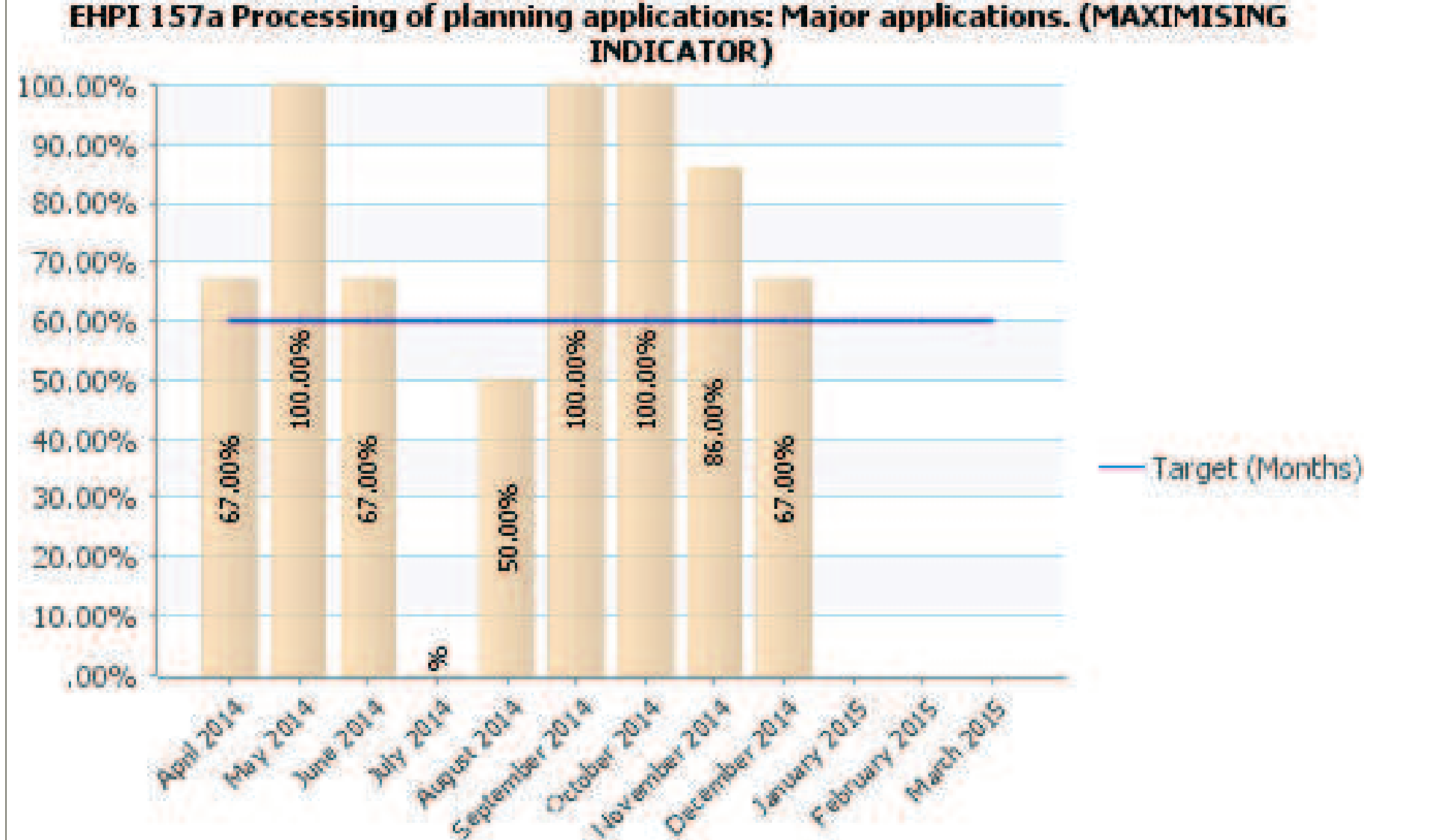
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 2.5	Total waste collected by the district (kg per household). (MINIMISING INDICATOR)	✔	235 kgs	242 kgs	↓	This indicator is calculated using a rolling average from the periods September 2014 to November 2014. Performance is well within target. Residual waste is on target, and the amount sent for recycling and composting is slightly above target.	None

**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**



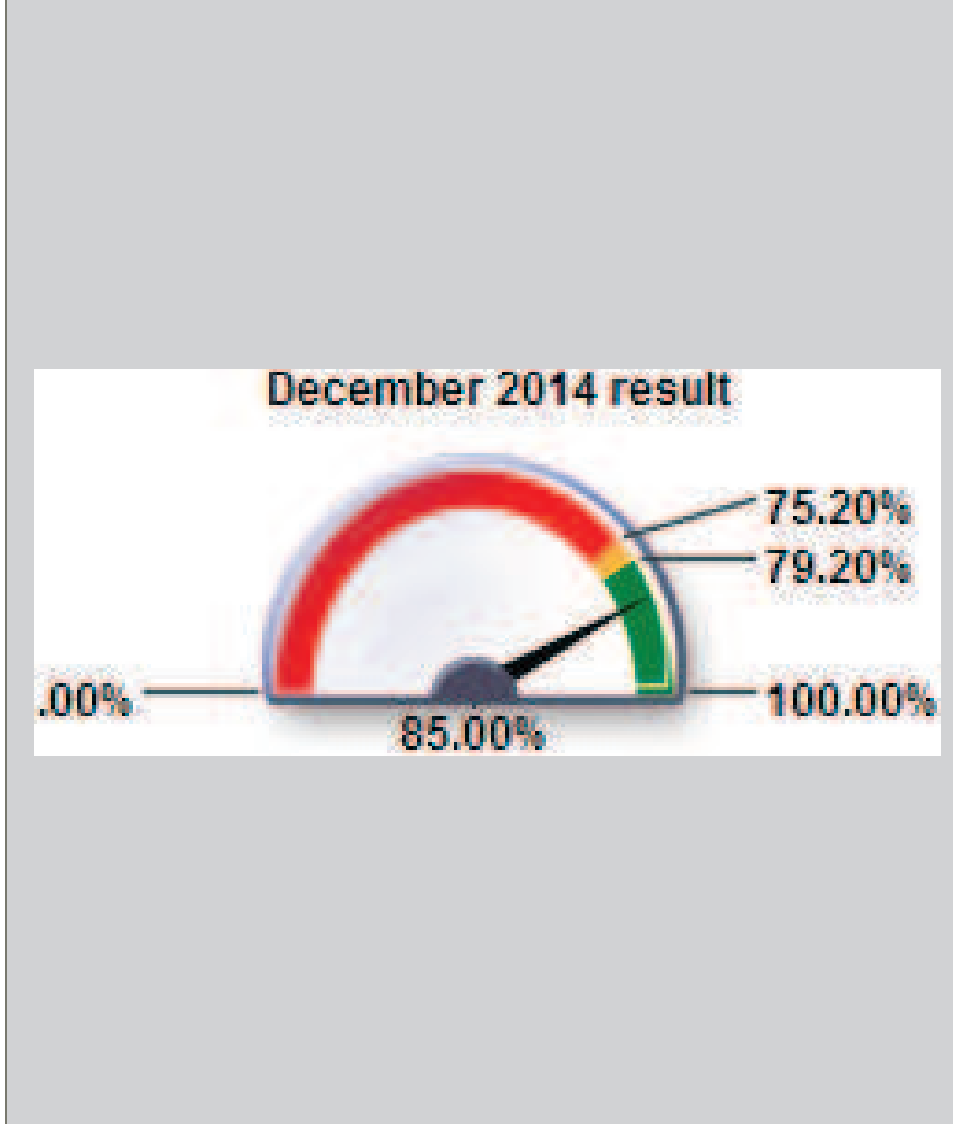
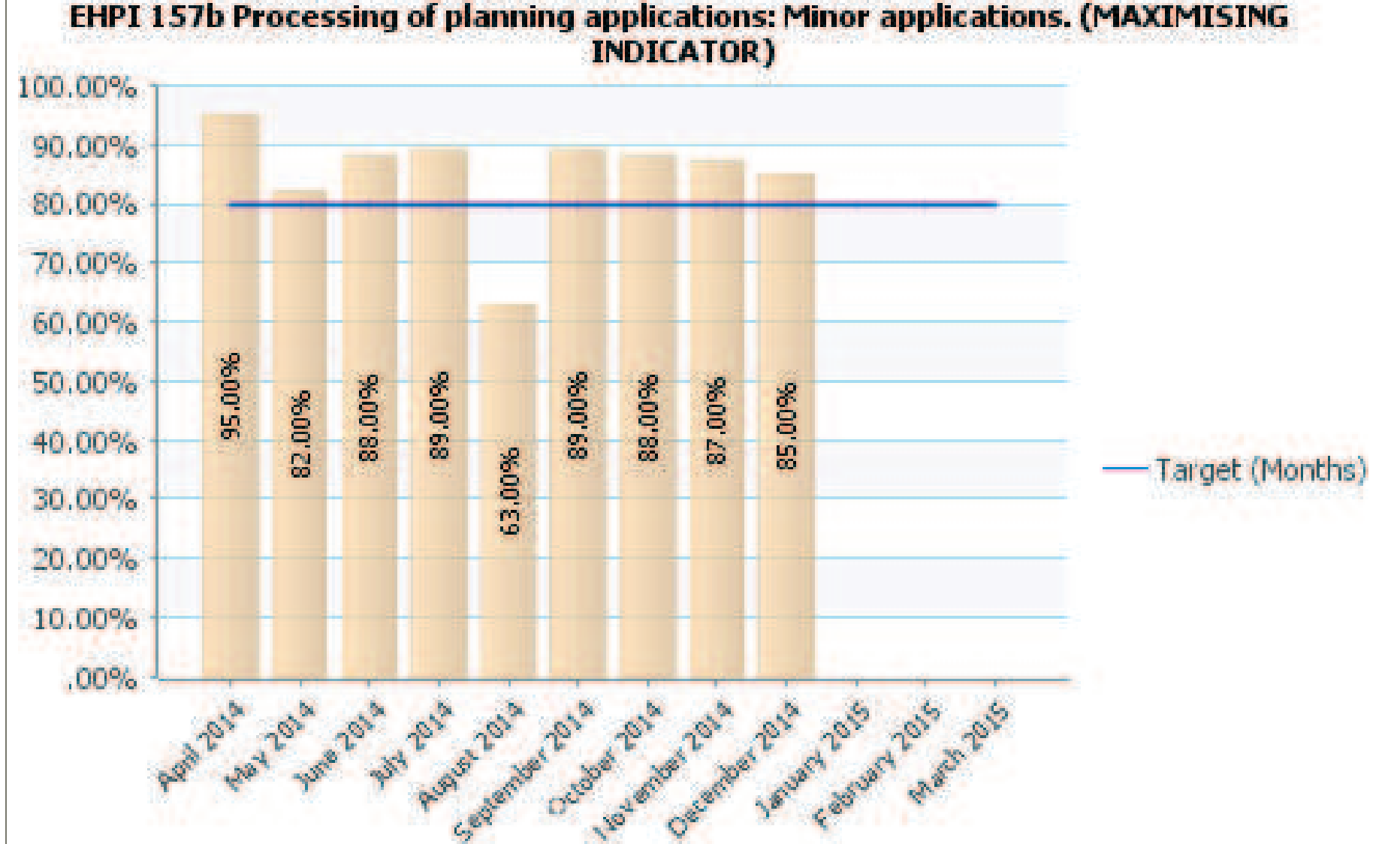
Planning and Building Control							
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 157a	Processing of planning applications: Major applications. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)	✓	67.00%	60.00%	↓	Performance is above target in December 2014 with 4 out of 6 major applications determined on time.	None

Trend Chart	Performance Gauge
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Planning and Building Control							
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 157b	Processing of planning applications: Minor applications. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)	✓	85.00%	80.00%	↓	Performance is above target for December 2014. 22 out of 26 minor applications were determined on time.	None

Trend Chart	Performance Gauge
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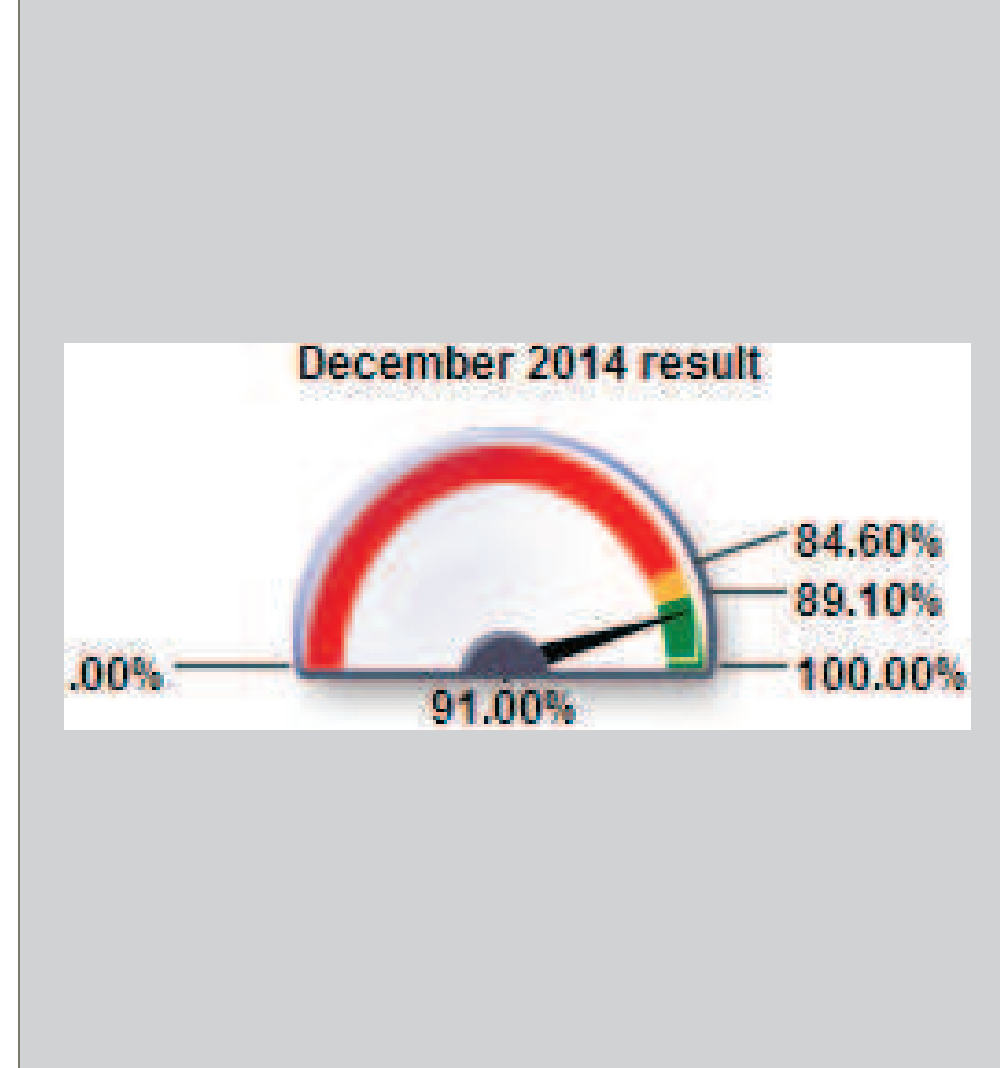
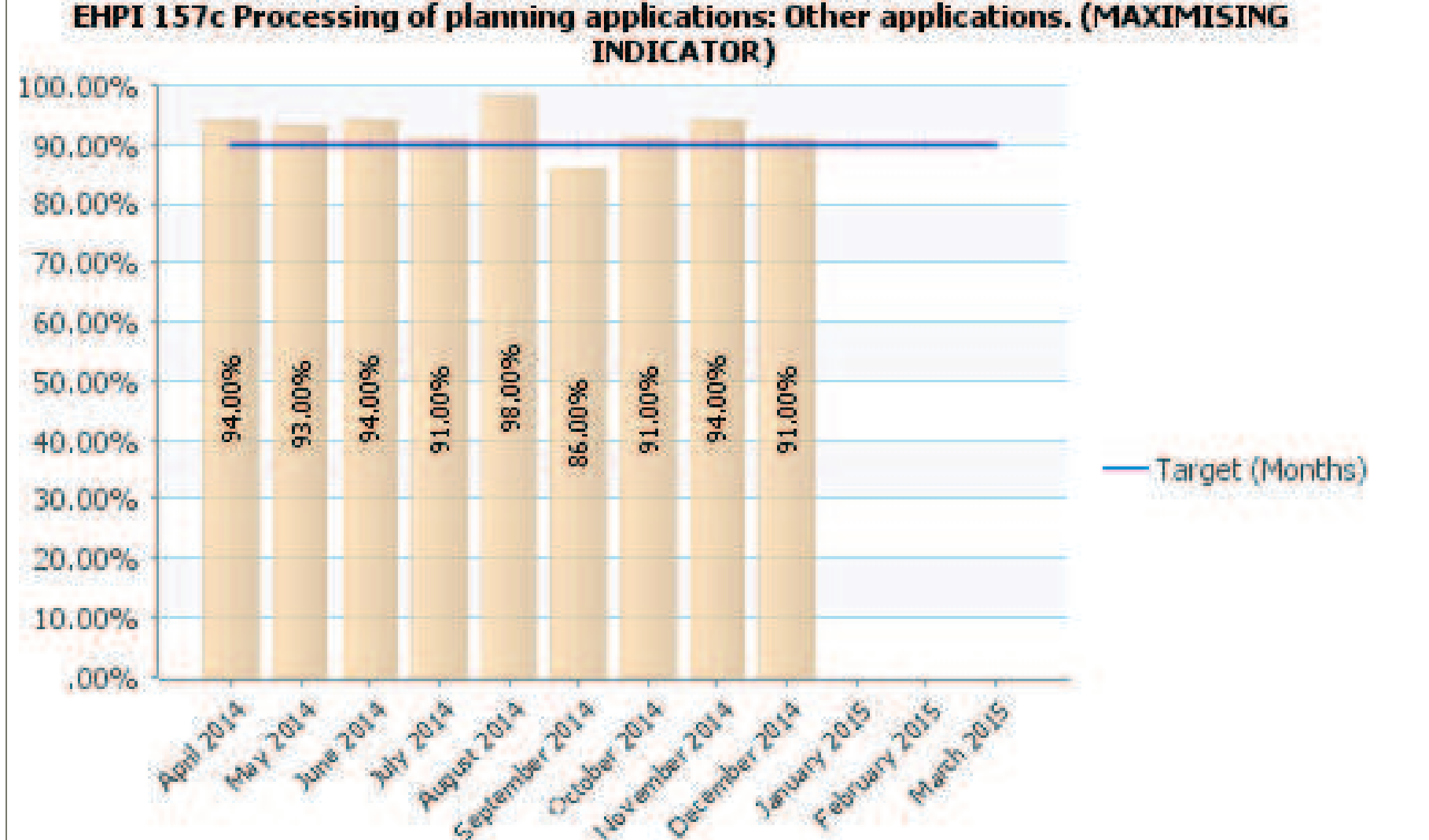




**Planning and Building Control**

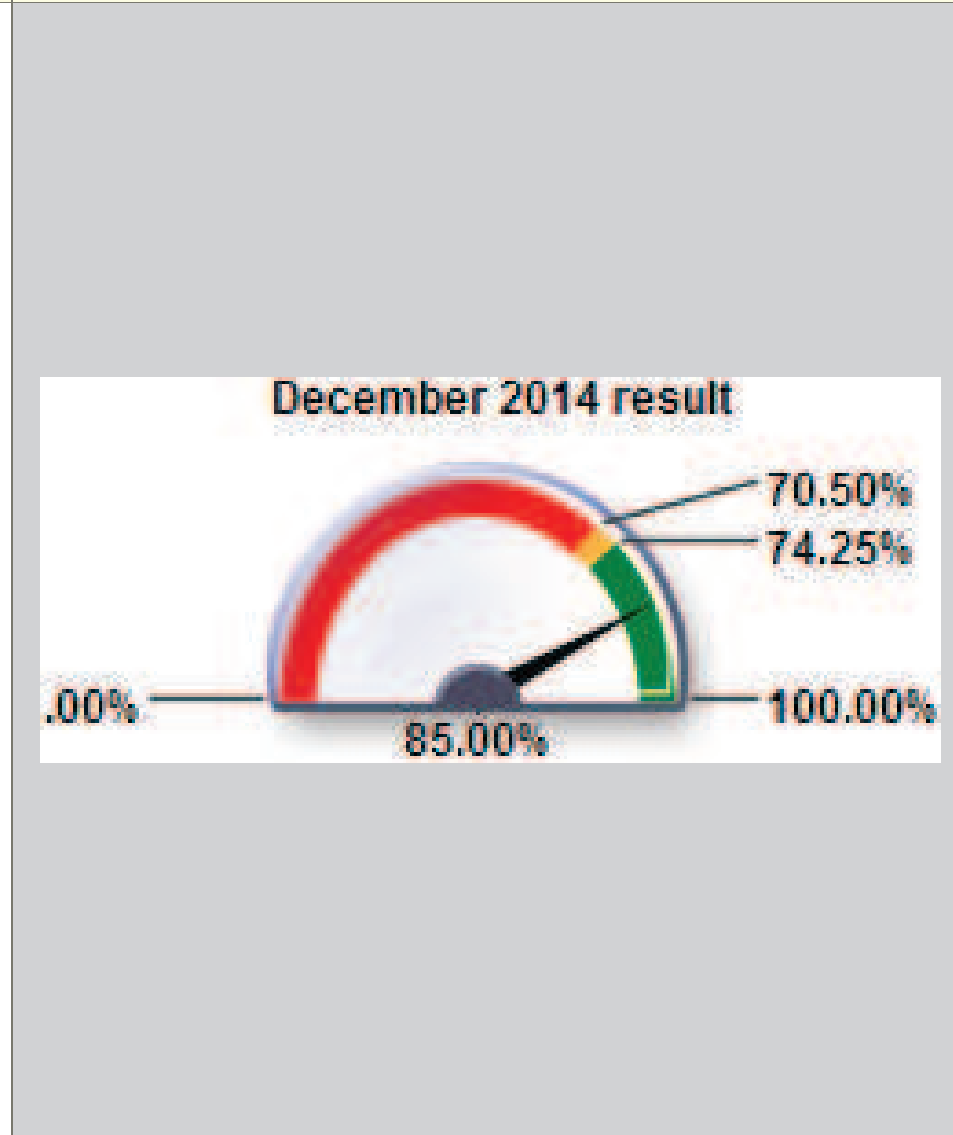
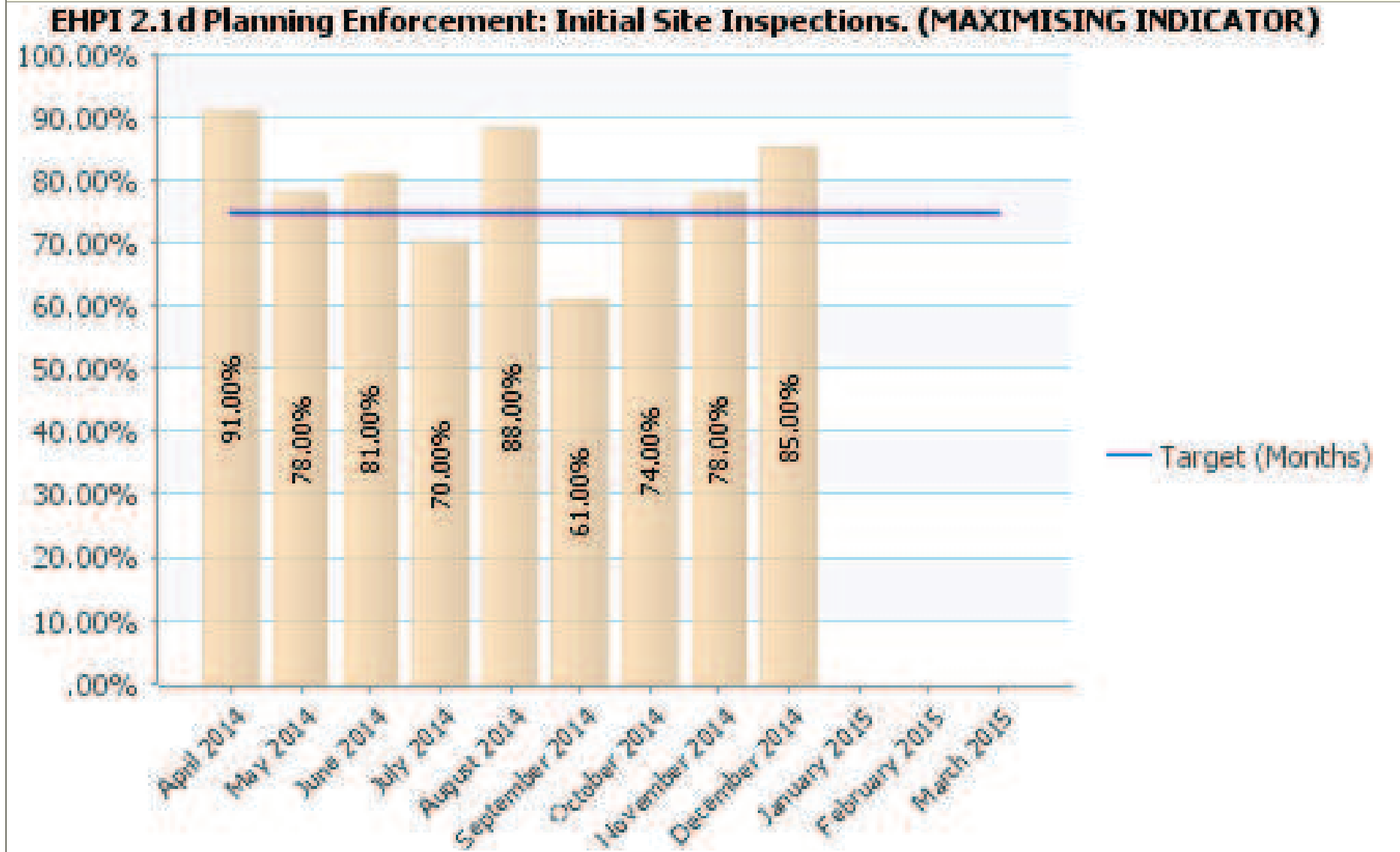
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 157c	Processing of planning applications: Other applications. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)	✓	91.00%	90.00%	↓	Performance on target for December 2014. 100 out of 110 other applications were determined on time.	None

**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**



Planning and Building Control							
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 2.1d	Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspections. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)	✓	85.00%	75.00%	↑	Performance is exceeding the target.	None

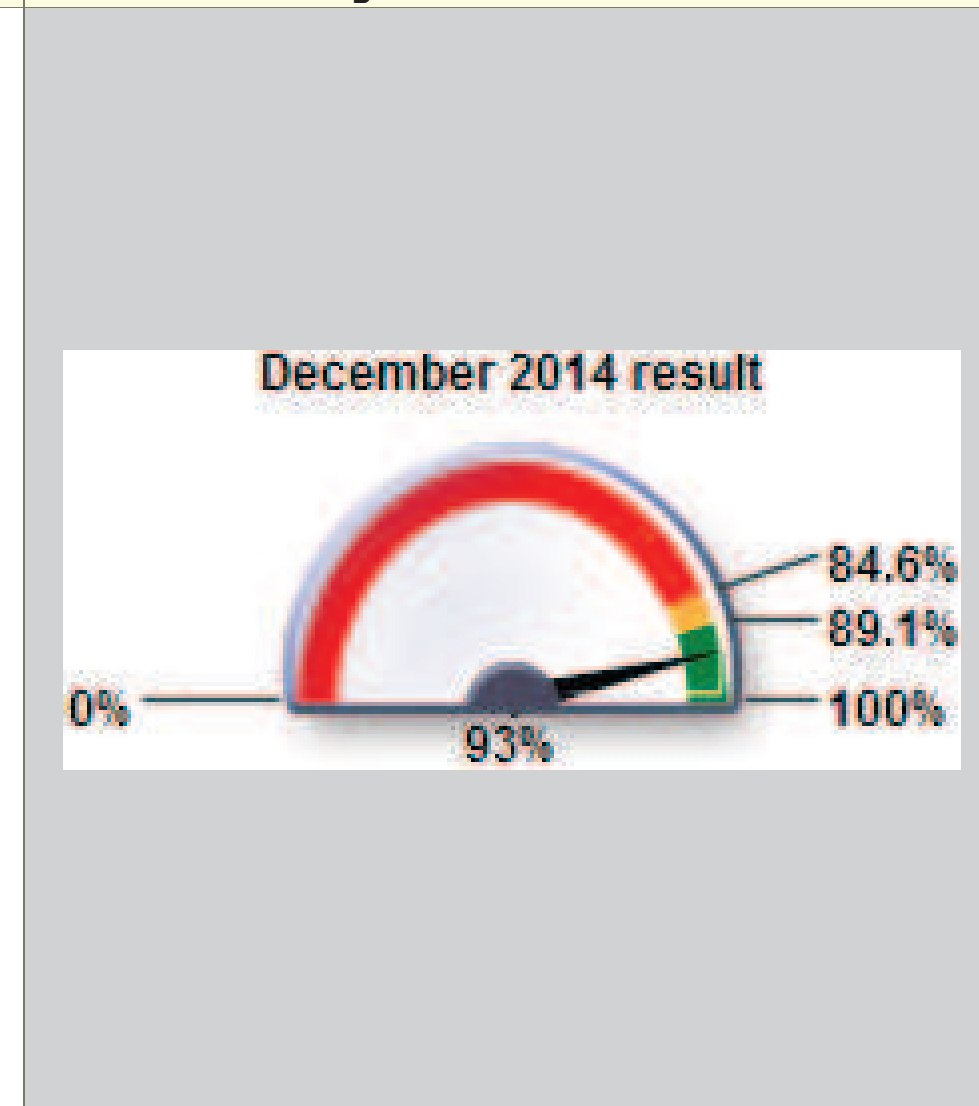
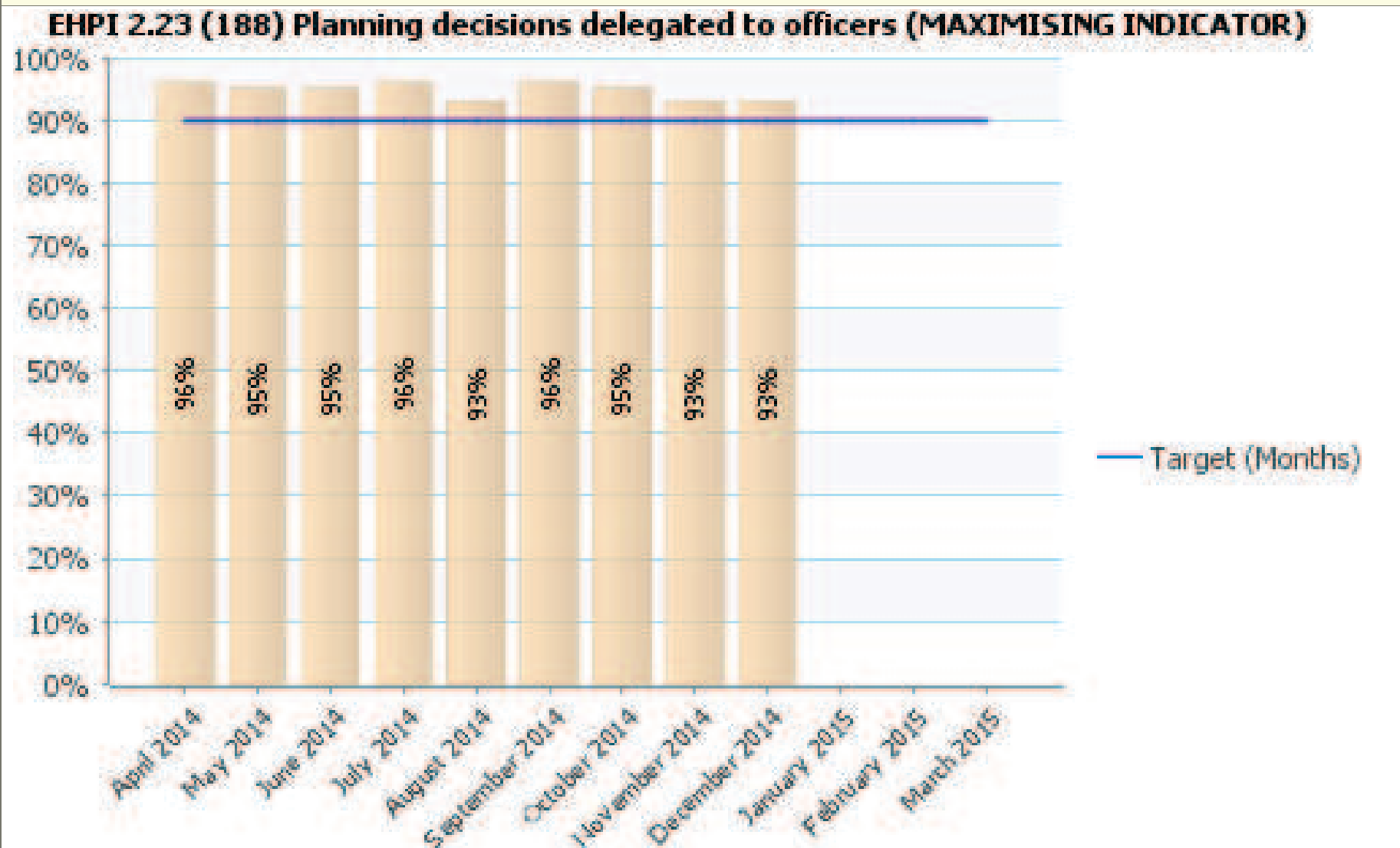
Trend Chart	Performance Gauge
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**Planning and Building Control**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 2.23 (188)	Planning decisions delegated to officers (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)	✓	93%	90%	▬	Performance is exceeding target. 132 out of 142 decisions delegated	None

**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**

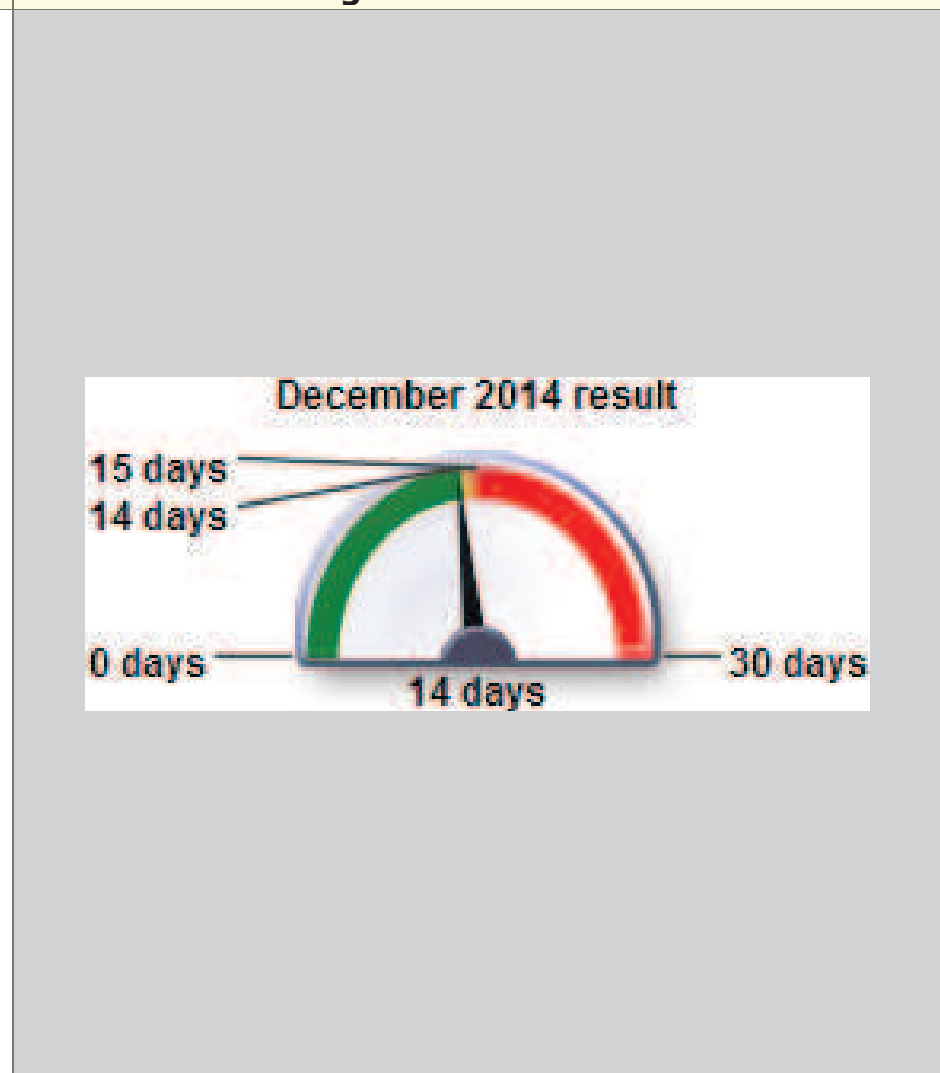
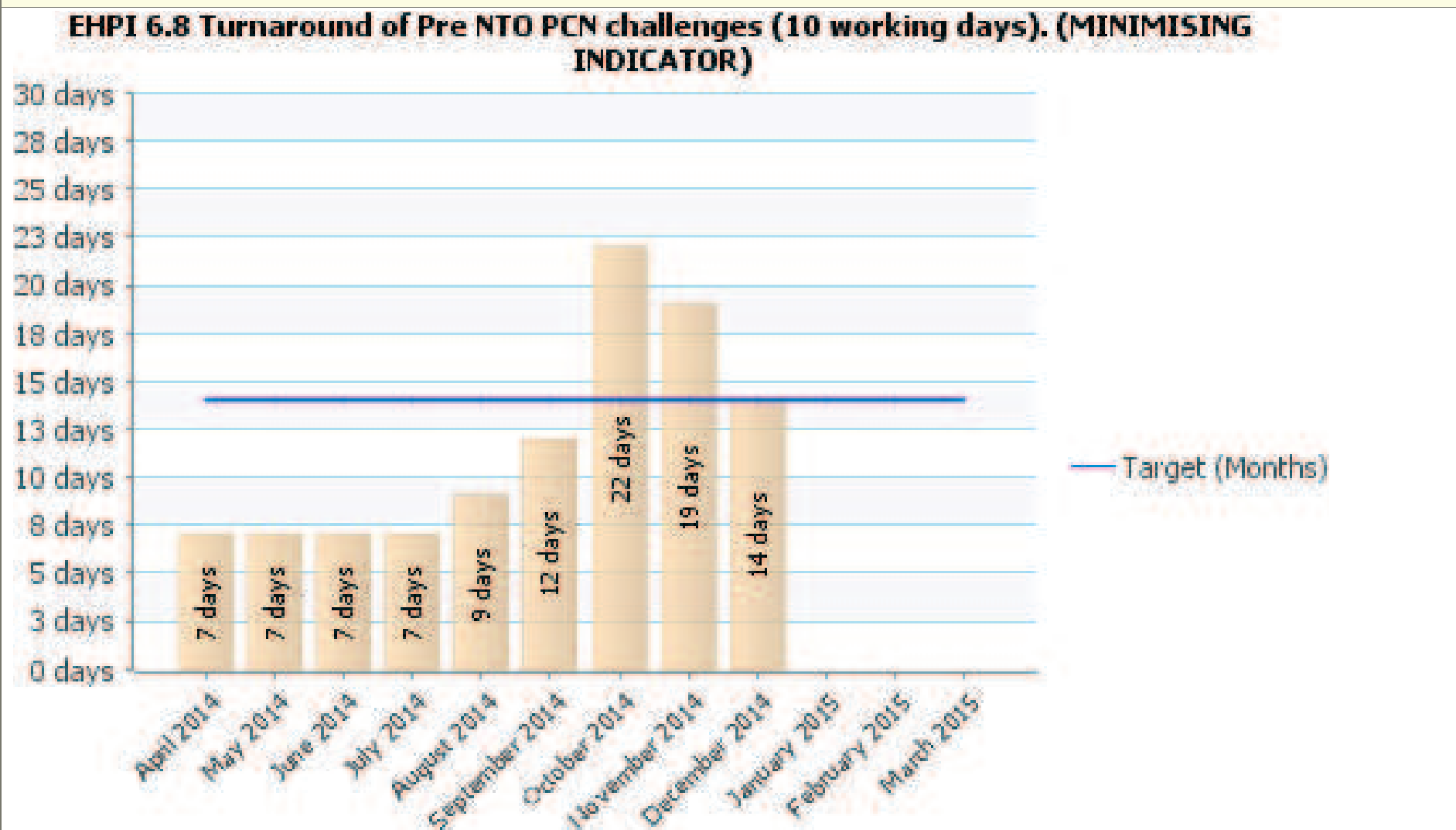


**Traffic Light Green**  
**Corporate Priority: Prosperity**

**Parking Services**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 6.8	Turnaround of Pre NTO PCN challenges (10 working days). (MINIMISING INDICATOR)	✔	14 days	14 days	↑	Performance is on target.	None

**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**



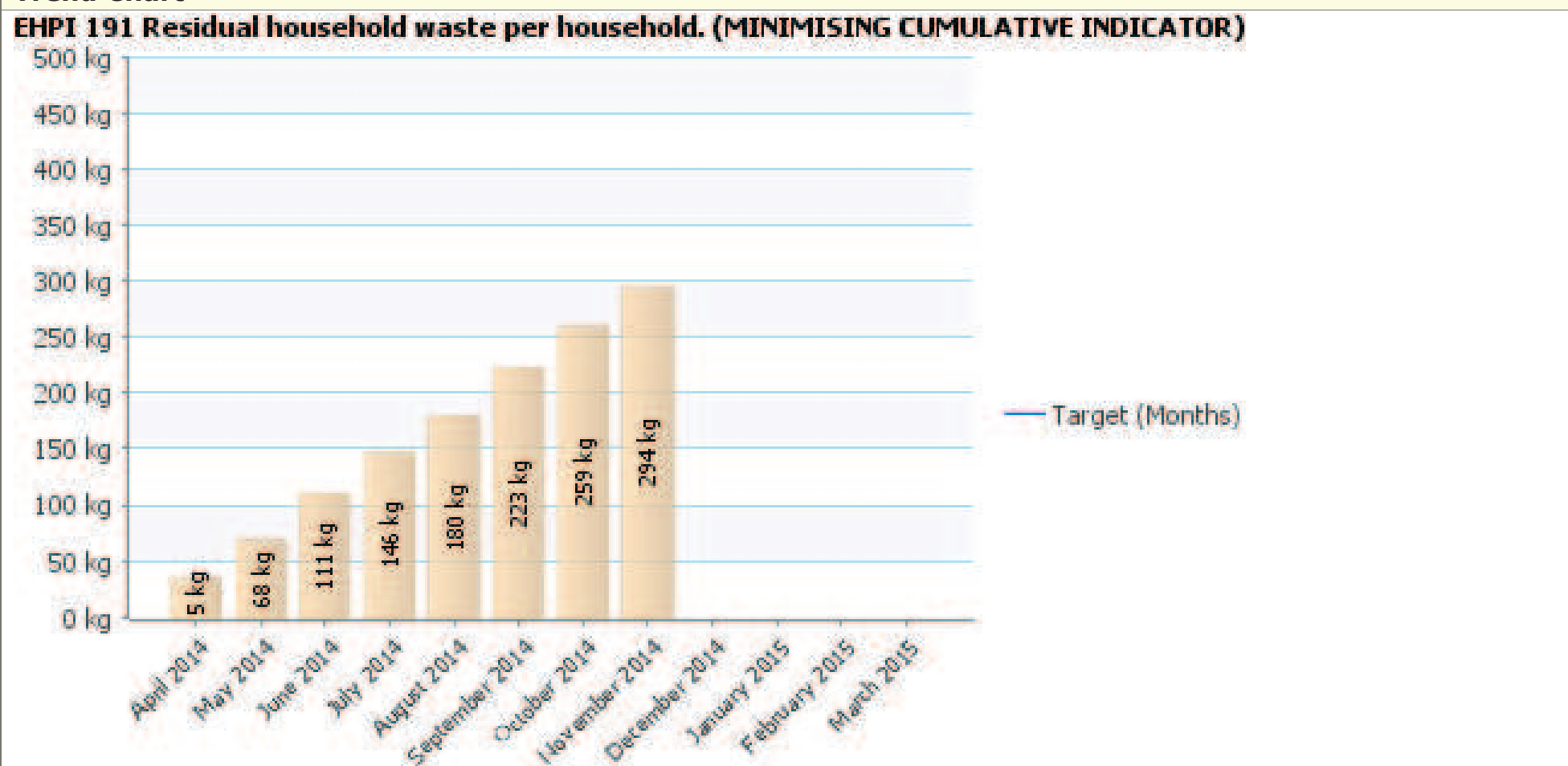
Parking Services																																	
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014																										
EHPI 6.9	Turnaround of NTO Representations. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)		14 days	21 days		Performance is within target.	<b>None</b>																										
Trend Chart						Performance Gauge																											
<p><b>EHPI 6.9 Turnaround of NTO Representations. (MINIMISING INDICATOR)</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Monthly Turnaround Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Turnaround (days)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>April 2014</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>May 2014</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>June 2014</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>July 2014</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>August 2014</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>September 2014</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>October 2014</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>November 2014</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>December 2014</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>January 2015</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>February 2015</td><td>-</td></tr> <tr><td>March 2015</td><td>-</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>— Target (Months)</p>						Month	Turnaround (days)	April 2014	7	May 2014	7	June 2014	7	July 2014	7	August 2014	9	September 2014	12	October 2014	22	November 2014	19	December 2014	14	January 2015	-	February 2015	-	March 2015	-	<p><b>December 2014 result</b></p> <p>0 days      14 days      21 days      22 days      35 days</p>	
Month	Turnaround (days)																																
April 2014	7																																
May 2014	7																																
June 2014	7																																
July 2014	7																																
August 2014	9																																
September 2014	12																																
October 2014	22																																
November 2014	19																																
December 2014	14																																
January 2015	-																																
February 2015	-																																
March 2015	-																																

**Traffic Light Unknown**  
**Corporate Priority: Place**

**Environment Services**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 191	Residual household waste per household. (MINIMISING CUMULATIVE INDICATOR)	N/A	294 kg	N/A	↓	Waste levels were high in November 2014 (this indicator reports one month in arrears) when compared with data from the rest of year. However when a comparison is made with November 2013 (299 kgs) performance is much improved.	None

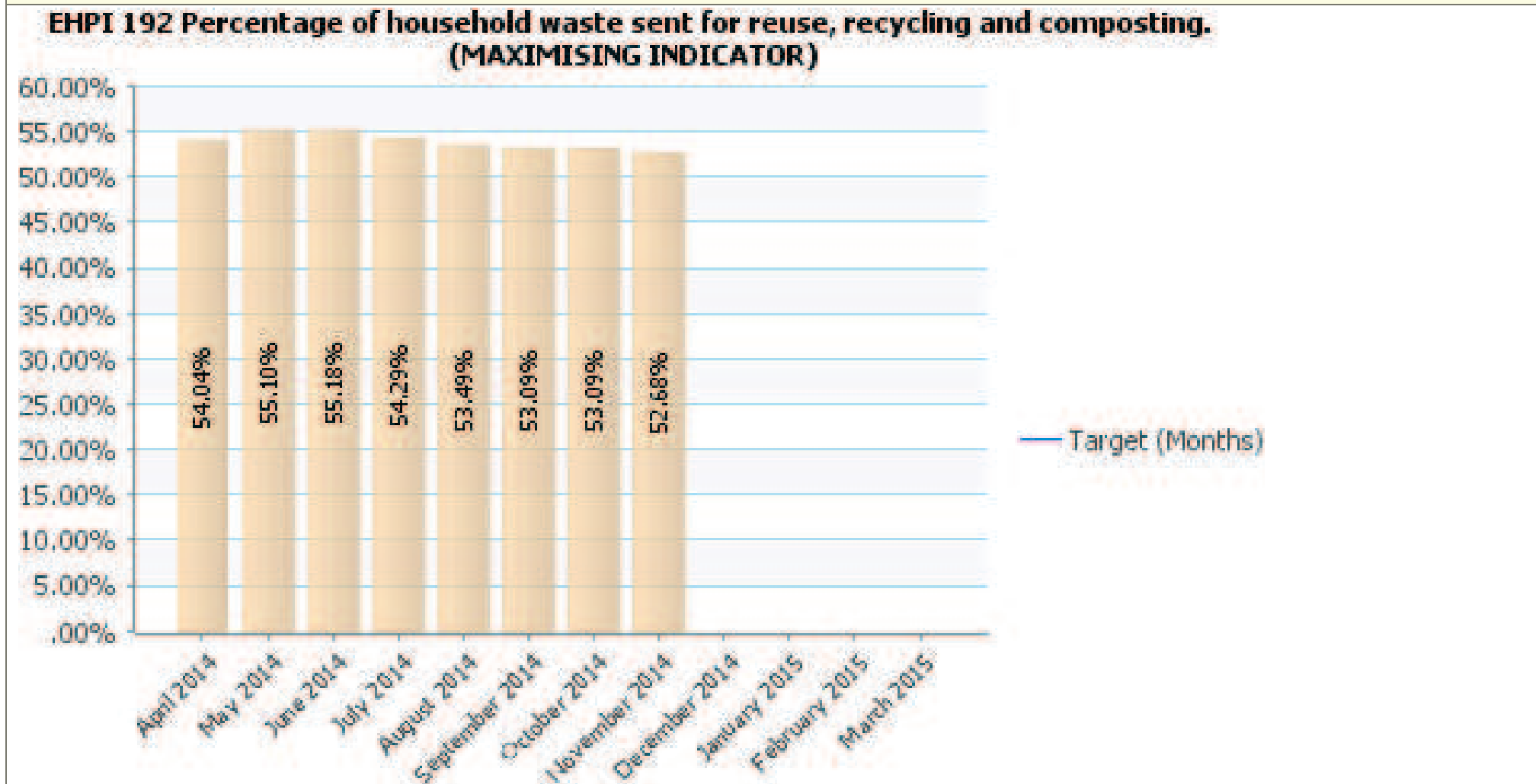
**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**



**N/A**

Environment Services							
PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)	N/A	52.68%	N/A	↓	Although November 2014 performance has slightly declined from the previous month (this indicator reports one month in arrears), performance has improved when a comparison is made to the same period last year (52.68% in November 2014 compared to 50.61% in November 2013).	None

Trend Chart	Performance Gauge
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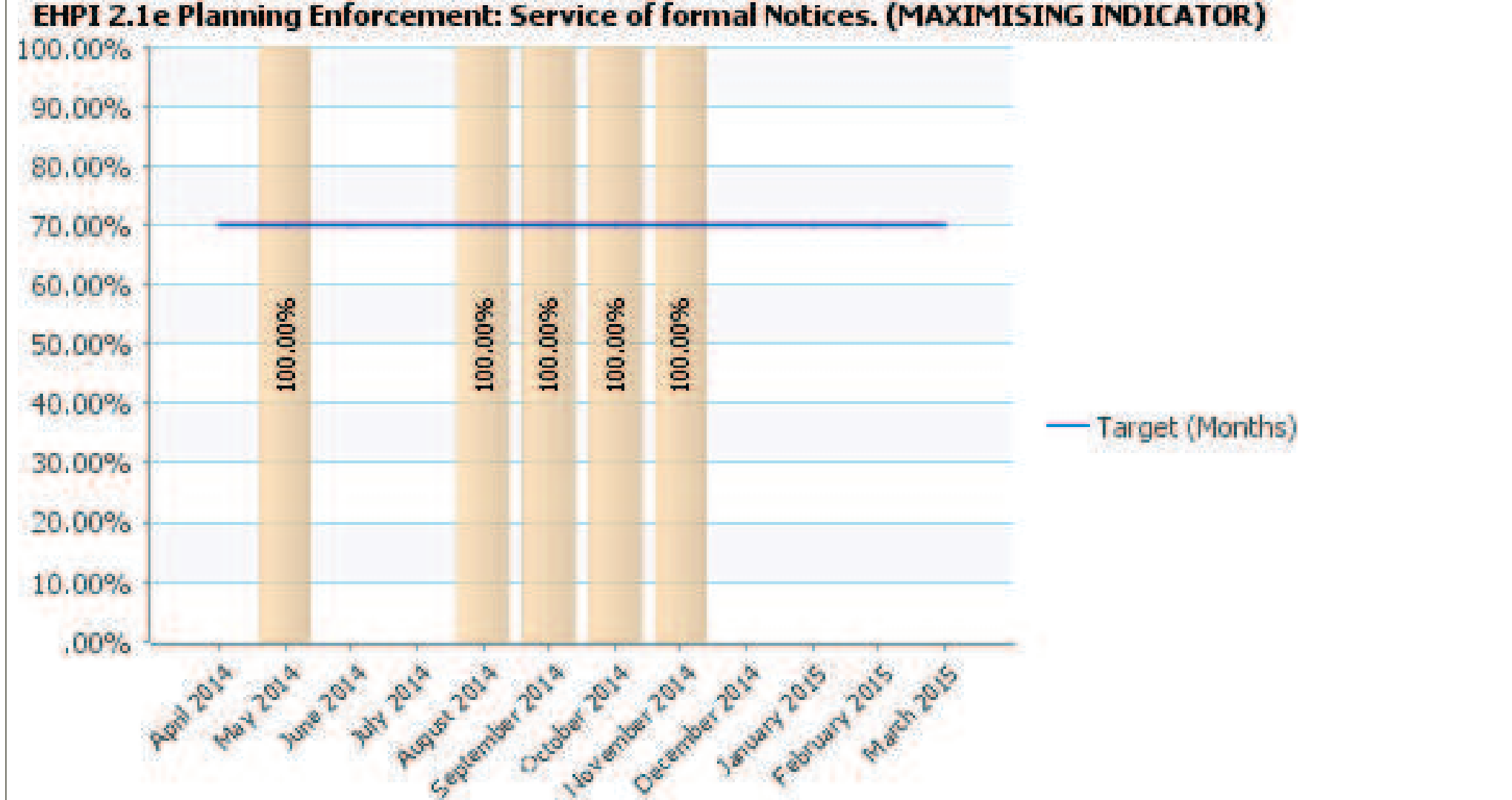


N/A

**Planning and Building Control**

PI code	Short Name	Status	Current Value	Current target	Short term trend	Notes	Recommendations made during last Scrutiny meeting on 11 November 2014
EHPI 2.1e	Planning Enforcement: Service of formal Notices. (MAXIMISING INDICATOR)	N/A	N/A	70.00%	N/A	No notices were served in December 2014 therefore there is no performance to analyse.	<b>None</b>

**Trend Chart** **Performance Gauge**



**N/A**

PI Status		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving
	Warning		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse





**For information only: Performance indicator guidance**

Sorted by PI code

<b>EHPI 157a</b> – Processing of planning applications: Major applications
<b>PI Definition</b>
<p><b>Percentage of planning applications by type determined in a timely manner.</b>                  A timely manner is defined as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• within 13 weeks for Major applications;</li> <li>• within 8 weeks for Minor and Other applications; and</li> </ul> <p><b>Good performance</b>                  Good performance is typified by reaching or exceeding the target.</p>
<b>Data Source</b>
Planning and Building Control

<b>EHPI 157b</b> – Processing of planning applications: Minor applications
<b>PI Definition</b>
Percentage of planning applications by type determined in a timely manner.

A timely manner is defined as

- within 13 weeks for Major applications;
- within 8 weeks for Minor and Other applications; and

**Good performance**

Good performance is typified by reaching or exceeding the target.

**Data Source**

Planning and Building Control

**EHPI 157c – Processing of planning applications: Other applications**

**PI Definition**

Percentage of planning applications by type determined in a timely manner.

A timely manner is defined as

- within 13 weeks for Major applications;
- within 8 weeks for Minor and Other applications; and

**Good performance**

Good performance is typified by reaching or exceeding the target.

**Data Source**

Planning and Building Control

<b>EHPI 191</b> – Residual household waste per household
<b>PI Definition</b>
<p><b>This indicator is the number of kilograms of residual household waste collected per household.</b>                  The <b>Numerator</b> (X) for this indicator is total kilograms of household waste less any household waste arisings sent for reuse, sent for recycling, sent for composting, or sent for anaerobic digestion.                  The <b>denominator</b> (Y) is the number of households as given by the dwelling stock figures from the Council Taxbase. The number of dwellings in each band at the end of the financial year (March figures) to which the indicator pertains, as provided by the Valuation Office, will be used. These are available from <a href="#">Local government finance statistics council tax and national nondomestic rates, dwelling numbers on valuation list (external link)</a>.</p> <p>Residual waste is any collected household waste that is not sent for reuse, recycling or composting.  <b>Good performance</b>                  Good performance is typified by a lower figure per household</p>
<b>Data Source</b>
Environment Services

<b>EHPI 192</b> – Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting
<b>PI Definition</b>
<b>The percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for reuse,</b>

**recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion.**

The numerator is the total tonnage of household waste collected which is sent for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion.

The denominator is the total tonnage of household waste collected.

**Good performance**

Good performance is typified by a higher percentage

**Data Source**

Environment Services

**EHPI 2.1d – Planning Enforcement: Initial Site Inspections****PI Definition**

Sum of enforcement cases where working days elapsed between date of receipt of enforcement case to initial site inspection date is equal to/less than 15 divided by total number of initial site inspections undertaken

**Other Guidance**

**Enforcement case:** each individual potential breach of planning control brought to the attention of the service.  
**Initial Site Inspection:** the first visit to and inspection of the location of the enforcement case to establish relevant information.

<b>EHPI 2.1e</b> – Planning Enforcement: Service of formal Notices
<b>PI Definition</b>
Sum of Formal Notices where the Date of Service is within 30 working days of the date of the DC Committee by which its service is authorised
<b>Other Guidance</b>
<b>Formal Notice:</b> Planning Enforcement notices authorised to be served by the DC Committee (Does not include any other form of notice such as Listed Building of Advertisement) <b>Date of Service:</b> Date on which a Formal Notice is first served on any relevant party which has an interest in relation to it.

<b>EHPI 2.2 (45)</b> – Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste
<b>PI Definition</b>
Number of properties served by refuse, recycling and composting collections multiplied by frequency of each collection type, divided by 100,000 then divided into nos. of missed collections.
<b>Data Source</b>
Environment Services

**EHPI 2.23 (188)** – Planning decisions delegated to officers

**PI Definition**

Number of applications decided by planning officers under a scheme of delegation and without referral to committee. APAS - Formula:  $PS2 \text{ (Total Decisions)} \text{ minus GAFquery (total Committee Decisions)} = \text{No} \times 100 / \text{Total Decisions} = \%$

**Data Source**

Planning and Building Control

**EHPI 2.4 (47)** - Fly-tips: removal

**PI Definition**

This PI is measured by the total time taken to clear fly-tips divided by number of fly-tips recorded on Mayrise, plus those reported and cleared same day by MRS.

**Data Source**

Environmental Services

<p><b>EHPI 2.5</b> - Total waste collected by the district (kg per household).</p>
<p><b>PI Definition</b></p>
<p>This indicator shows over time whether waste produced by householders is reducing or increasing. The Council works with the Herts Waste Partnership to actively encourage residents to think about how they can minimise the amount of waste they produce and therefore the cost to the tax payer of collecting and disposing of it.</p>
<p><b>Data Source</b></p>
<p>Environment Services</p>

<p><b>EHPI 2.6</b> - Percentage of residual waste (refuse) sent for disposal.</p>
<p><b>PI Definition</b></p>
<p><b>The percentage of residual waste (refuse) which has been sent by the authority for disposal.</b></p> <p>The numerator is the total tonnage of residual waste collected which is sent for disposal.</p> <p>The denominator is the total tonnage of residual waste collected.</p>

<b>Data Source</b>
Environment Services

<b>EHPI 6.8</b> - Turnaround of Pre Notice to Owner (NTO) Parking Charge Notice (PCN) challenges (10 working days)
<b>PI Definition</b>
Sum of days elapsed from receipt of challenges (scanning date used as proxy for challenge received date) to response / total number of challenges.
<b>Data Source</b>
Parking Services
<b>Other Guidance</b>
Data for this PI taken from ICPS which works in calendar days; therefore adjust target to 14 days when calculating figure to allow for weekends.



<b>EHPI 6.9 - Turnaround of Notice to Owner (NTO) Representations</b>
<b>PI Definition</b>
Sum of days elapsed from receipt of NtO representations (scanning date used as proxy for representation received date) to response / total number of NtO representations.
<b>Data Source</b>
Parking Services
<b>Other Guidance</b>
Calculated from ICPS but using calendar days not working days.

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## EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 17 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY

EVALUATION OF SCRUTINY 2014/15 AND WORK PROGRAMME  
PLANNING FOR 2015/16

WARD(S) AFFECTED: *none*

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### **Purpose/Summary of Report**

- To review 2014/15 and determine Environment Scrutiny Committee's future work programme

### **RECOMMENDATION FOR ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY**

**That:**

<b>(A)</b>	the comments given as part of the evaluation exercise are collated and used to frame the draft 2014/15 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report; and
<b>(B)</b>	the work programme shown in this report be agreed (subject to confirmation by the new 2015/16 committee)

#### 1.0 Background

1.1 Items previously required, identified or suggested for the Environment Scrutiny work programme are set out in **Essential Reference Paper B**.

#### 2.0 Evaluation

2.1 During last year's scrutiny evaluation process, Members identified a number of areas of practice where they wanted to improve and these were included in the 2014/15 Action Plan. This document is included here as **Essential Reference Paper C**.

2.2 Reflecting back on the past year, Members are asked to:

- comment on progress against this action plan
- describe specific examples of successful practice from the work of this scrutiny committee

- identify any challenges or barriers which they have met during this time.
- 2.3 Members are asked to recommend which (if any) of the actions should be carried forward to the 2015/16 Action Plan and what additions or changes might be needed to strengthen the role of scrutiny in the coming year.
- 2.4 As part of the wider evaluation discussion, Members are asked to identify what they are most pleased to have achieved through scrutiny during the past year and what has been the most interesting or useful thing they have learned during the year.
- 2.5 Evaluation feedback from all the scrutiny committees and the Health and Wellbeing Panel will be collated and used to frame the draft 2014/15 Overview and Scrutiny annual report. This draft will be reviewed and approved by the scrutiny chairmen and presented to Council on 29 July 2015.
- 2.6 Any suggestions on how the function of scrutiny might be changed or improved will be considered by the new (2015/16) scrutiny chairmen and officers at their first meeting of the new civic year.
- 3.0 Work Programme Planning
- 3.1 A draft work programme for 2015/16 meetings of Environment Scrutiny Committee is shown in **Essential Reference Paper B** (subject to confirmation). The timing of some items shown may have to change depending on availability of essential data (eg from central government).
- 3.2 Delays in the publication and availability of some key information (external to this authority) have already resulted in two scheduled reports being moved into the 2015/16 civic year and some coming to committee later in the year than shown on previous copies of the work programme. **Essential Reference Paper B** attached shows a draft work programme which takes account of the expected external delays (based on current information).
- 3.3 Members are asked whether they wish to extend an invitation to one or more of the Executive/portfolio holders to attend a particular meeting or for a specific agenda item listed in the draft work programme.
- 3.4 A request has been received inviting Environment Scrutiny Committee to play a new role in the monitoring of progress against

management plans arising from the **Conservation Area Appraisals**.

- 3.5 The ward councillor is seen as central to the success of these plans by being a 'conservation champion' and the 'eyes on the ground' to support the work of the specialist officer(s) of the authority.
- 3.6 It is suggested that Councillors would be set up in groups, as the plans are ready and approved – to meet together under the guidance of lead officers to discuss progress on the management plans. The groups could look at balancing progress of quick/easy 'wins' against investing resources into large/complex 'problem' sites. Councillors would be encouraged and supported to work with local householders/landowners and relevant agencies (eg town/parish councils) to progress items on the management plan.
- 3.7 Councillors would be acting in their role of community leaders/activist to bring people together to find practical and pragmatic ways forward (including identifying possible sources of grants etc).
- 3.8 Working in these reference groups will give councillors the chance to be supported by specialist officers, learn from each other and identify successes and any areas of challenge or common problems. It will also give experienced ward councillors and newly elected councillors the chance to work together on an important project.
- 3.9 The groups' experiences could then be reported annually to Environment Scrutiny – to record progress against the management plans but, more importantly, to make the committee aware of any common barriers or challenges. This will allow scrutiny to consider the issues and make recommendations to the Executive Member (or other agencies) as to how progress might be achieved.
- 3.10 If the current Environment Scrutiny Members are in agreement, a more detailed version of how this might work and the make-up of the proposed reference groups would come to the first meeting of the new Environment Scrutiny committee (9 June 2015) with a view to the first 'annual report' on the Conservation Areas being presented to the committee at their final meeting of 2015/16 (23 Feb 2016).

- 3.11 Members are asked whether there is any additional topic they wish to put forward for consideration by scrutiny in 2015/16 (subject to confirmation by the new committee at their first meeting in June 2015).
- 3.12 In suggesting topics, Members should have in mind the council's agreed corporate priorities for the coming year (shown below) and be able to identify what tangible outcome(s) and benefits they would want to achieve through undertaking this piece of work.

<b>PEOPLE:</b> fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute
This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.
<b>PLACE:</b> safe and clean
This priority focuses on the standard of the built environment and our neighbourhoods and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.
<b>PROSPERITY:</b> improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities
This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic and social opportunities.

#### 4.0 Implications/Consultations

- 4.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers: none

Contact Member: Cllr Mark Pope – Chairman Environment Scrutiny Committee  
[mark.pope@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:mark.pope@eastherts.gov.uk)

Contact Officer: Jeff Hughes – Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services Extn 2170  
[jeff.hughes@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:jeff.hughes@eastherts.gov.uk)

Report Author: Marian Langley – Scrutiny Officer  
[marian.langley@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:marian.langley@eastherts.gov.uk)

## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

### IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives</p> <p>(2014/15 version)</p>	<p><b>People – Fair and accessible services for those that use them and opportunities for everyone to contribute.</b> This priority focuses on delivering strong services and seeking to enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable.</p> <p><b>Place – Safe and Clean.</b> This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p><b>Prosperity – Improving the economic and social opportunities available to our communities</b> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p> <p>Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet one or more of its corporate objectives.</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Potential topics for scrutiny are always invited from the Executive and all Members and the public are asked through an annual item in the 'council tax' edition of LINK magazine which is delivered to every household.</p> <p>Members of each scrutiny committee (and the HWP) are consulted at every meeting as their work programme is a standing item on the agenda.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>According to the Council's constitution, the scrutiny committees are responsible for the setting of their own work programme in consultation with the Executive and in doing so they shall take into account wishes of members on that committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>Any additional meetings and every task and finish group has resource needs linked to officer support activity and time for officers from the services to make the required input.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Matters which may benefit from scrutiny may be overlooked. The selection of inappropriate topics for review would risk inefficient use of resources. Where this involved partners, it could risk damaging the reputation of the council and relations with partners.</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing – issues and impacts:</p>	<p>The broad remit of scrutiny is to review topics which are of concern to the public, many of which have an indirect impact on the general wellbeing of residents of East Herts.</p> <p>The Health and Wellbeing Panel is set up to specifically focus in on issues and topics which have a direct and immediate impact on the health and wellbeing of all those who live, work or study in the district.</p>

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**Environment Scrutiny Committee work programme 2015/16 (draft)**

meeting	date	topic	Contact officer/lead	Next Exec
<b>2015/16</b>	<b>CIVIC YEAR</b>			
1 in 2015/16  <b>PARKING:</b> Induction training to be held pre-Environment Scrutiny	09 June 2015  Report deadline 27 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Programme for 2015/16 – discussion with new committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>	7 July 2015 4 Aug 2015 1 Sept 2015
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance Reporting – Contract Performance 2014/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Service. NOTE: this item must be here as going on to Exec 7 July 2015</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint working on Waste and Street Cleansing with NHDC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Service</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>TBC:</b> resident parking permit schemes – policy development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requested at Exec on 3 Feb 2015</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Service Plan monitoring – Oct 2014 to March 2015 (Environment only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Officer – Corporate Planning</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthcheck through to March 2015 (which includes relevant 2014/15 Out turns and Targets)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Officer - Performance</li> </ul>	
2 in 2015/16	08 Sept 2015  Report deadline 26 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car park management system retendering – developing the available options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Service and lead officer. NOTE: this item must be here as going on to Exec 6 Oct 2015</li> </ul>	6 Oct 2015 3 Nov 2015
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of changes to East Herts' Environmental Crime policies in the light of the new ASB, Crime and Policing Act</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Head of Service (Item held over to this date to allow further legal guidance and case law to develop).</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthcheck through to June 2015</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Officer - Performance</li> </ul>	
3 in 2015/16	10 Nov 2015  Report deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate Change – report on progress against action plan with data on savings from 2014/15 year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Officer with Head of Service (Government data on carbon figures not released until late August)</li> </ul>	1 Dec 2015 5 Jan 2016 2 Feb 2016

	28 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fuel Poverty Strategy and Action Plan for East Herts – supported by costed proposals in respect of grants for loft/cavity walls, take up of Green Deal and promoting Oil Clubs etc</li> <li>Work Programme</li> <li>Service Plans monitoring Apr 2015 – Sept 2015 (Environment only)</li> <li>Healthcheck through to Sept 2015</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Officer and Service Manager (delayed to this date as publication of government framework held over until after the general election)</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> <li>Lead Officer – Corporate Planning</li> <li>Lead Officer - Performance</li> </ul>	
<b>JOINT SCRUTINY</b>	19 Jan 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2016/17 Budget items</li> </ul>		
<b>JOINT SCRUTINY</b>	09 Feb 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2016/17 Service Plans</li> <li>2015/16 Performance Indicator Estimates and 2016/17 Future targets</li> </ul>		
4 in 2015/16	23 Feb 2016  Report deadline 10 Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report from the Conservation Champion Reference Groups on progress and problems relating to Conservation Area management plans.</li> <li>Report on the study of Pavement and Grass Verge Parking – policy implications</li> <li>?</li> <li>Healthcheck through to Dec 2015</li> <li>Work Programme – planning for 2016/17</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBC</li> <li>Lead Officer (+graduate trainee)</li> <li></li> <li>Lead Officer - Performance</li> <li>Scrutiny Officer</li> </ul>	8 Mar 2016 5 Apr 2016 7 Jun 2016 TBC

**The four principles of good public scrutiny:**

- ***provides ‘critical friend’ challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers***
- ***enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities***
- ***is carried out by ‘independent-minded governors’ who lead and own the scrutiny role***
- ***drives improvement in public services***

**Environment  
Scrutiny**

1. To develop policy options and to review and scrutinise the policies of the Council relating to planning policy, local development framework, Building Control, Planning Enforcement, Development Control, transport policy (concessionary fares and subsidised bus routes), Highways Partnership, parking and economic development, energy conservation, waste management, parks and open spaces, historic buildings, conservation – green agenda, Local Strategic Partnership and street scene.
2. To make recommendations to the Executive on matters within the remit of the Committee.
3. To take evidence from interested groups and individuals and make recommendations to the Executive and Council for policy change on matters within the remit of the Committee.
4. To consider issues referred by the Executive, or members of the Committee and where the views of outsiders may contribute, take evidence and report to the Executive and Council on matters within the remit of the Committee.
5. To consider any item referred to the Committee by any Member of the Council who is not a member of this Committee and decide whether that item should be pursued on matters within the remit of the Committee.
6. To appoint annually Standing Panels as may be determined which shall be given a brief to consider a specified service area relating to matters within the remit of the Committee and report back to the Committee on a regular basis as determined by the Committee.
7. To consider, should it choose to do so, any item within the remit of the Committee to be considered by the Executive (except items of urgent business). The relevant report to the Executive will be made available to the Scrutiny Committee. The Executive shall consider any report and recommendations on the item submitted by the Scrutiny Committee.
8. To consider matters referred to the Committee by the Executive/ Portfolio Holder on matters within the remit of the Committee and refer the matter to the Executive following consideration of the matter.

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**WHAT ARE OUR PLANS FOR 2014/15?**

Councillors have identified some areas in which they would like to further strengthen scrutiny in 2014/15:

What we want to do?	How are we going to do it? – an action plan for 2014/15
<b>Actively look for ways to improve the level of community and public involvement in scrutiny</b>	<p>Research and review how other (similar) authorities involve and engage the public in their scrutiny process.</p> <p>Continue to invite topic suggestions from residents and explore idea of getting issues raised through existing channels/agencies (including town/parish councils, youth councils, community groups, partnership meetings etc).</p>
<b>Strengthen and highlight use of evidence from independent or outside sources.</b>	<p>Scrutiny members (particularly Chairmen and ViceChairmen) to make it clear that they would expect to see some comparative evidence when they commission a report.</p> <p>Use cost effective and timely ways of bringing external evidence into any review where relevant or requested: through expert (external) witnesses – in person or in writing, visits, surveys/questionnaires, published documents/research and good practice examples from other (similar) authorities.</p>
<b>Clearly identify the ‘value added’ which scrutiny can bring to a topic and ensure this is monitored and recognised</b>	<p>Focus scrutiny reviews on topics where there is real scope for influencing change and where measurable benefits for residents can be seen.</p> <p>Bring monitoring reports on progress/outcomes from reviews to the Chairmen and ViceChairmen meeting (3xyear).</p> <p>Identify outcomes which can be used in council publications to illustrate the positive impact of scrutiny to raise awareness (not just in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report).</p>
<b>Continue to keep scrutiny members informed and offer opportunities to develop skills needed</b>	<p>Continue to offer induction training and information to any newly elected member(s) and offer refresher and update training for returning members.</p> <p>Continue to publish the scrutiny e-Newsletter every 6 months and make use of weekly bulletin (MIB) to update councillors on significant issues/developments and scrutiny events.</p> <p>Send councillors ‘pre briefing’ material where relevant to widen knowledge on the context/background to topics and offer briefing/clinics before critical budget meetings.</p>
<b>Strengthen scrutiny of external public bodies and partners</b>	<p>Where relevant, move from ‘scrutiny of’ to ‘scrutiny with’ partners when reviewing local services offered to residents.</p> <p>Identify opportunities (jointly with other councils where possible for efficiency) to scrutinise aspects of the Local Strategic Partnership, Local Enterprise Partnership, Community Safety Partnership or any common issue.</p> <p>When invited, contribute (in person or in writing) to scrutiny reviews run by other authorities on issues which impact on East Herts residents.</p>

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